

PLUCK AND LUCK

STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

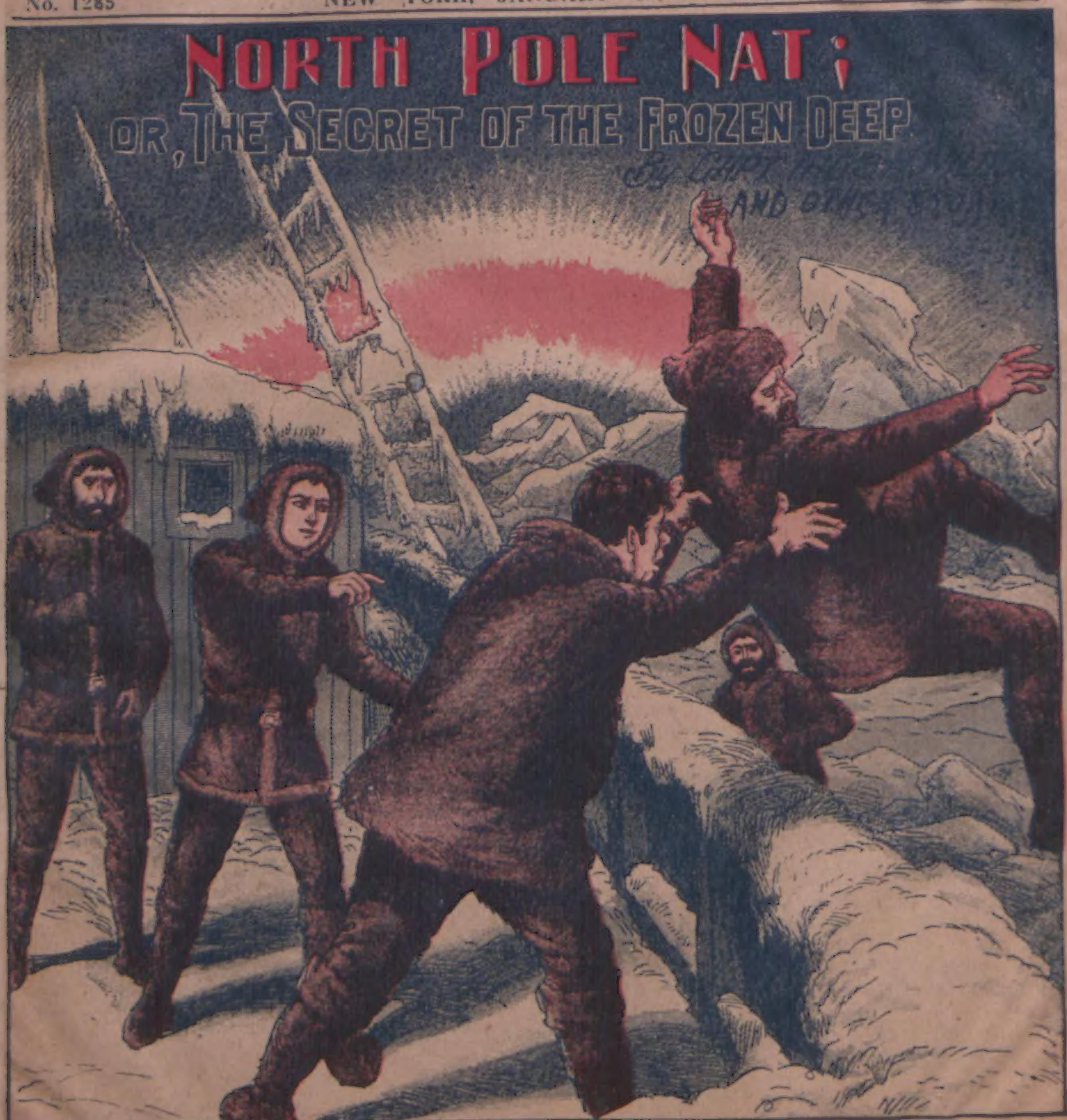
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NORTH POLE NAT; OR, THE SECRET OF THE FROZEN DEEP



Chucks, seizing him around the waist, as though he were an infant, carried him up on deck, and treated him as his comrade had been served a moment before. "There, now," grunted the rotund oarsman. "You're not going to fool Mr. Chucks."

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NORTH POLE NAT

OR, THE SECRET OF THE FROZEN DEEP

BY CAPT. THOS. H. WILSON

CHAPTER I.—The Whaler.

"There she blows!"

The cry came from the masthead of an American whaling bark, cruising in the Arctic Ocean, late in September of the year 1869, in latitude 79 degrees and 26 minutes N., longitude 71 degrees and 22 minutes W., or about the middle of Smith's Sound. The bark was the Arctic Fox, James Hathaway, master, of New York, and had remained rather late in the season, owing to Captain Hathaway's desire to make a good catch. Many of the crew had demurred to this, being afraid of having to remain in the ice during the long Arctic winter, which is invariably severe. The captain was determined, however, and there was no disputing him when he made up his mind to anything. Had he listened to reason he would still be alive and well, in all probability, and his crew would have been spared a vast deal of privation and death.

In that event, however, this story might never have been written, or the strange events which it depicts, never have happened. To return to the bark, however, and the seamen aboard of her. At the well-known hail, one which the men had been anxiously waiting to hear for many days, every sailor, awake or asleep, sprang to his feet. Every whaleman knows the magic there is in that sound, changing idle, listless beings into nervous, excited creatures, every fiber of their systems throbbing with enthusiasm, every sense alert, every muscle strained to its utmost.

"Where away? sang out the captain, in a ringing voice which could be heard in every part of the ship.

"Almost straight ahead, sir."

"Who's that up aloft?" asked the mate, Mr. Cartwright.

"Job Hawkins, sir," answered a lad of about twenty, tall, well-built, and muscular.

This was Nathan Hawkins, commonly called Nat, the hero of our story.

"If Job Hawkins says he sees anything, you can rely upon it," said the mate. "He has the sharpest eyes in the whole fleet, and a better harpooner never lived."

"How far off are they, Job?" called out the captain.

"About six miles, sir."

"Regular Greenlanders, are they?"

"Ay, ay, sir! I don't see but one of 'em, but

he's big. Got two spouts to him as thick as my arm, travelin' putty fast, too. There he blows ag'in sir."

"We'll have him, if there is only one," murmured the captain. "He'll make over a hundred barrels, more'n likely, to say nothing of the bone."

Nat scrambled in the forerigging in order to get a good sight of the monster, just as the captain called out again:

"Sure there's only one, Job?"

"That's all, sir."

"There she blows!" yelled Nat, on the instant: "there's two of them."

"Hallo, North Pole Nat has got something to say about it," muttered Mr. Cartwright. "He's forever sticking in his oar."

Nat was forever talking about the North Pole, his father having been lost on an exploring expedition there, and Cartwright had nicknamed him North Pole Nat, the title sticking to him, as such things will. As Nat sang out, the sailors looked aloft, and one or two of them laughed, though these were not the friends of the young fellow. A handsome cabin-boy, probably about sixteen years of age, and looking remarkably effeminate for a youth, though he was as bright and smart as any boy, gazed with admiring looks at Nat, perched up aloft, and said in a low tone:

"He may have as good eyes as you, Mr. Mate, and know as much, for all your poking fun at him."

"Can you make out two of them, Job?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir, I can now. Nat was right about that. T'other one has just come up."

"Do you see more than two, Nat?"

"No, sir, and mine is not as big as Job's."

"They're heading for the drift in, sir," shouted Job, from his exalted perch in the crow's nest, as the lookout is called upon a whaler.

"Come down from aloft; shipkeeper, get your signals ready, clear away the boats there, get in your line tubs."

Job and Nat ran down the rigging like monkeys, the sailors hurried to and fro, and a scene of great excitement and bustle ensued. The boat-steerers, or harpooners, looked after their "craft," as the harpooners, lances, and other implements used against whales are called, the tub-oarsmen put the tubs containing the lines into the boats

amidships, while others cleared the falls from the davits, so as to be ready to hoist the boats from the cranes when the proper order should be given. In southern latitudes it is customary for whalers to divest themselves of all superfluous clothing when getting ready to chase whales, but here the case was quite different. The weather was cold and piercing, the men at the wheel and aloft having to protect their hands with fur mittens, and everybody aboard was dressed in furs, fitting quite tight, so as to allow free play of the muscles. The time when whalers usually returned had long passed, and the quantity of drift ice to be met with was something alarming, an occasional iceberg being also seen in the distance.

Even now, the spray dashed up by the cutwater of the Arctic Fox was frozen as it fell on the bowsprit, stays, and lower guys, and the martingale was one mass of ice. The wind whistled through the rigging and cut like a knife if one exposed his face to it for any length of time, and the only way to keep warm was by constant exertion. The days were already beginning to grow very short, and before another month would cease altogether. No wonder then that the men grumbled; and they were ripe for mutiny, which was only quelled by the firmness of the captain. Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Jones, the first and second mates, were among the malcontents, and nearly half the seamen were under their control, Job Hawkins and Nat remaining true to the captain.

"When we get this fellow boiled down," muttered the mate to his fellow conspirator, "we start for home, or I must now the reason why; you don't catch me staying here any longer."

"Why not refuse to go after him at all?"

"No, no, that won't do; we must seem to obey, but—"

The sentence was completed in the man's ear, and no one else heard it.

"All right, then, that will do first-rate."

"All ready there?" sang out the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"I'm going to take my bomb-gun, Joe," said the master. "Don't lower away till I come back," diving into his cabin as he spoke.

A bomb-gun is a very large bore weapon, used for shooting the bomb lances into a whale's side, the barrel being more than an inch in diameter, inside measurement. The bombs are sharp and winged like an arrow, and when they pierce any substance a hammer is tripped which explodes a cartridge, and gives the huge cetaceans a bad and generally fatal wound. Captain Hathaway soon returned with his gun and a box of bombs, nearly a foot in length, which he deposited in the stern sheets.

"Hoist and swing," was the order; the boats were lifted from the cranes, the latter swung inboard, and the men at the falls stood ready for the next order.

"Lanier!"

The ropes flew through the blocks, the men scrambled into the boats, each in his place, the oars were run out and away pulled the sailors, many looking upon the Arctic Fox for the last time.

CHAPTER II.—An Exciting Chase.

The whaling back carried four boats, manned respectively by the captain and three mates, each officer having a harpooner and four seamen, making six men to a boat. Aboard the vessel were the shipkeeper and his crew, consisting of the cook, steward, carpenter, cooper, blacksmith and one or two extra hands. The shipkeeper signaled to the boats the movements of the whales whether they were up or down, which way they went, whether they had disappeared for good, when to return to the ship, and everything else that was necessary to know. He commanded the vessel in the captain's absence, and the men under him were obliged to obey him in all particulars, as though he had been the captain himself. The boats went dancing over the waves, their sails set and the men pulling besides, while the signal flag, flying aloft, indicated that the whales were still in sight, and unmindful of the presence of enemies.

The cook was at the wheel, and kept the vessel's head as it had been, for that told which direction the cetaceans were taking, and saved the boat headers much trouble, as often the sea ran so high that things near at hand are hidden, and therefore a glance backward at the vessel is the easiest way to tell what is going on. The two whales were seemingly unconscious of the approach of their enemies, and were blowing and playing in the water, lashing the icy waves into foam, and leaving a greasy wake, or "sleek," as sailors call it, behind them. The wind blew fresh and strong and after a while the men unshipped their oars, so as to make as little noise as possible. The shipkeeper, Ed Lewis, by name, a raw-boned, big-chested Nantucket man, had, in his hurry, left his glass below, and looking down he called out:

"Below there! Tell Frank to bring up my glass."

"He isn't here, sir," answered the carpenter.

"Where is he?"

"Gone in the old man's boat, I reckon."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, sir. If he was here we'd seen him before this, for he's a lively lad."

"Confound the young scamp!" muttered the man to himself. "Why the blazes couldn't he stay aboard, I'd like to know?"

Frank Trafton, the cabin-boy already alluded to, had indeed gone after the whales, taking a seat by the side of the captain, and occasionally assisting him in steering, for the harpooner never goes aft until after the whale has been struck, his superior doing the killing, and he the steering after that. Frank was a general favorite on board, and upon that account the captain had made no objection when he found the lad at his side, but merely smiled, and patted his curly head. In the captain's boat, besides himself and Frank, were Job Hawkins, who pulled the harpooner's oar; Ned Evans, stroke; Jim Brown, tub; a rotund specimen of humanity called Chucks, 'midship; and a brawny Yankee by the name of Sol Sampson, bow. The boat was ahead of the three others, the mate's boat coming next in order, and every man was in a fever of ex-

citement, which increased as the distance between them and the whales momentarily lessened. The latter were keeping a pretty steady course, but not being aware of the approach of the boats, did not go as fast as the latter, so that the captain gained upon them every minute.

It was a pretty even thing, however, for they were still three or four miles behind, and no one could tell at what moment the whales might become frightened, "galled," the sailors called it, and either go down, or start off at such a rate that it would be hard to follow them. The men sat idly upon the thwarts, talking in low tones, the captain steering, and Frank tending the sheet of the sail, easing off occasionally, and then drawing it a little flatter as the breeze freshened. Two hours passed, and the boats were still a mile or so behind, at least the captain's boat was, the others having fallen considerably to the rear. The distance lessened, and presently the captain ordered the men to take in sail, unstep the mast, and get out their paddles, which made less noise than oars. The orders were obeyed, and soon the paddles were dipped deep and with an even stroke in the water, the boat gliding over the sea at a fair rate of speed. By some mischance Chucks struck the shaft of his paddle against the gunwale and made considerable noise, which the whales heard, gifted as they are with an acute sense of hearing. They took the alarm immediately and were off like a shot, going right away from their pursuers.

"Get out oars, bullies," said the captain; "pull away, my tars. Now, then! Give 'em a good, long, steady stroke, Nat, and we'll overhaul these greasers yet."

Half an hour later, the boat had drawn so near that Job took in his oar, stood up, and got his harpoon ready.

"Pull easy, my boys," whispered the captain; "steady and easy, and don't make any more noise than you can help."

"Put me off a bit, sir," said Job, putting his knee in the chock and poising his weapon. "I want to hit him abaft the hump, and I'm a little afraid of his flukes."

The whale was an immense fellow, being over one hundred feet in length, and of a dark gray, mottled with brown, promising from his looks to yield a good supply of oil and bone. He had every appearance, too, of being a troublesome fellow, and without doubt would give the whalers a hard job to subdue him. His monstrous flukes beat the water and churned it up every now and then, the twin columns of vapor and water shooting up every now and then from the spout holes, as he would sink a few feet and then arise, a decidedly "fishy" odor being perceptible, although, properly speaking, a whale is not a fish, but a marine animal. The captain put the boat off a little so as to allow it to pass the flukes or tail of the monster, and then when about midway of the creature's length, headed toward him. Job now poised his harpoon, braced himself firmly, took a good aim, and calculating the distance carefully, made a good three-fathom dart, driving the harpoon deep into the monster's side, just back of the hump, the best place in the world for it.

"Stern, stern!" yelled the captain, thinking that the whale would turn upon him.

The man backed water, and the line ran out as the whale dashed ahead, lashing his flukes, and uttering a kind of snort as he felt the sharp barbs of the harpoon piercing his sides. The thrust had been a good one, and a stream of blood dyed the water crimson, but in spite of this, the animal kept on increasing his speed as he went along. The smaller whale had sounded when the bigger one was struck, and at that time was nowhere to be seen.

"Pull ahead, bullies!" said the captain, taking a turn around the loggerhead with the line, so as not to let it run out too fast.

"Shouldn't wonder if I could give him another dart, sir," spoke up Job. "He's a big fellow, and the fust iron might pull out."

"All right, Job; get your other harpoon ready, and I'll put you on him in a minute. Pull ahead, bullies! How do you like this kind of sport, Frank?" turning to the lad at his side.

"First-rate, sir; it's very exciting, and I shouldn't wonder if it was dangerous as well."

"You're right there, my lad; it is dangerous sometimes, and no mistake. Keep a good stroke, Nat, and never mind the whale. He can't hurt us, for we're out o' the way of his flukes."

"Put me a little nearer now, sir, and I'll sock it to him again," remarked Job poising his second harpoon, there being three in the boat.

"All right," answers Captain Hathaway; and as Job comes within good distance once more, the slack of the line having been taken around the loggerhead, he makes a second dart, sending the harpoon further forward than the first, but in a good place, nevertheless. The whale makes a bound as the second iron enters, and the line plays out rapidly, the captain not caring to get a slap of those flukes, which would stave his boat to bits in a moment. As the whale did not sound, the captain took a turn around the bit again, and let the greasy fellow tow him, the men having already shipped their oars, the speed being too fast to make them of any use.

"Light your pipes, boys," said the captain, jocosely. "We'll let this fellow tire himself out, and then we'll run up and lance him. I'll signal the other boat to come down."

Little did he expect that he would never see them again, or that his life-current had nearly run out.

CHAPTER III.—An Unexpected Catastrophe.

Affairs now became more exciting than ever, for the boat was being towed through the seething waters at a rate of not less than seven knots, the sea bubbling all around them, and a gleaming wake trailing out behind. Then, too, the drift ice became thicker, and it was a matter of considerable skill to steer clear of some of the larger masses, a contact with which would have been the destruction of the boat. The captain had brought his glass with him, and after being towed for fully half an hour, he got it out from beneath the stern sheets, and gazed long and earnestly ahead of him.

"I don't like the looks of that ice," he muttered; "it seems to be packing in towards shore.

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and right across the channel, too. It's likely that it'll do the same behind us as well."

Frank Trafton, who had turned around and was looking astern of him, suddenly cried out at this juncture in startling tones:

"I can't see the boats anywhere, sir, for the life of me. Nor the ship, either," he added in the next breath.

The captain turned about and swept the horizon with his glass.

"My God! She is nowhere to be seen!" he gasped. "Do you see this fog is settling down all around us? It hides her from sight."

"Tain't a fog at all," mutters Job, still seated forward, "but a regular cloud-bank; and if it don't mean snow, and lots of it, then I'm mistaken."

"Is he going fast, Job?" asked the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir, every bit; no, he's slackin' up some; guess we can haul in upon him."

"Come aft, Job, and I'll see if I can stop his nonsense."

Job went aft and took the steering oar, while the captain, armed with a long and exceedingly sharp lance made of the finest steel, took his place in the bow. The men dipped their oars and pulled lustily, the captain being alongside in a few minutes, his arm raised for the blow. Deep into the animal's side he plunged the lance, pulling it out and thrusting it in again and again, finally churning the whale with it, and causing the blood to gush out in a crimson stream. The animal, although mortally wounded, made a dive for the boat, and the men were obliged to back water immediately. The line slacked, and the captain got his foot in a bight of it unwittingly. The whale suddenly changed his tactics, the line tightened, and ran out rapidly, the loop about the captain's leg drawing up in an instant, and before he could cry out or release himself, he was dragged overboard into the boiling sea. Job uttered a cry of horror, and seizing the hatchet, which is always ready for such emergencies, cut the line. He was too late, however, for the unfortunate skipper had been drawn down beneath the surface, and was nowhere to be seen. He did not come up again, and in all probability he had been rendered unconscious by the fierce rush of waters, and no doubt dead long before that time.

"There goes the whale," said Nat, "blowing like fury. I guess he don't feel sorry, for a cent."

They waited around the spot for nearly an hour and saw no trace of the captain, finally coming to the conclusion that he had not been disentangled from the rope, and that in all likelihood the whale was still towing him through the water, as probable a conclusion as any they could arrive at.

"Then we'd better go back," remarked Job, when this conclusion was reached.

"Easier said than done, my brave man! There is no going back now, no matter how hard you try!"

As he spoke there came a sharp blast which cut to the bone, and in an instant the huge snowflakes were whirling around them in a blinding mass. Job, turning to shield himself, slipped, and fell into the bottom of the boat, losing his hold upon the steering oar, which floated away

out of sight in an instant. The storm was so fierce that the men could not see where they were going, or even to pull their oars, the only thing to be done being to sit still until it subsided. The captain's greatcoat was under the stern thwart, and Nat got it out and made Frank wrap himself in it, for the boy, more delicate than the rest, was beginning to feel the cold and shivered like a leaf.

The snow fell as thickly as ever, and continued to do so for an hour, by which time it was quite dark, the snow still falling, though not so fast as before.

"We might as well have a light, anyhow," was the sudden remark of Job, nobody having a word to say for ten minutes. "Get out the lantern, Nat."

Every whale-boat carries, when in pursuit of whales, a boat lantern, which is put in a keg made expressly for it, and Nat got this out, and shielding it from the wind, struck a light and ignited the wick. The lantern was then put in the line-tub, the attempts to step the mast and hoist it to the top thereof having been abandoned after two or three trials.

"There's no use trying to get home to-night," muttered Joe (every sailor speaks of his ship as "home") "and I don't see why we can't comfortable. We've got some grub, so let's eat it, and then talk about something else."

The crew at once followed Job's suggestion, and made a hearty meal, after which the harpooner and Chucks lit their pipes (no whaleman is ever without his pipe and tobacco) and enjoyed the luxury of a smoke.

"Won't you have a whiff, Frank?" asked Job, with a laugh.

"No, I thank you."

"You'll never make a man if you don't use tobacco," laughed Job.

"I'll never be any more a man than I am now, I guess, tobacco or no tobacco. Wonder if I'd better go to sleep."

"Do you feel cold?" asked Nat.

"Not a bit."

"Nor drowsy, either?"

"No; but I suppose we shall be here all night, and that's why I spoke of going to sleep."

"You're all right," answered Job, with a snort. "You don't know why North Pole Nat asked you those two questions, do you?"

"For information, I presume."

"Exactly, and if your information had been different he wouldn't let you go to sleep for a fortune."

"Why not?"

"'Cause if you had, you'd be frozen to death afore mornin', just as sure as my name is Job Hawkins."

"Frozen to death!" exclaimed Frank, in surprise.

"Yes," answered Nat. "There's no danger now, however, and if you like, you can roll yourself up in your big coat, cover your face, and drop off to sleep, and the thicker the snow falls on you the warmer you'll be. Keep the snow off your face, that's all, and you're safe enough."

"Pass me the lantern," said Job, without further comment, and Frank did as requested.

The harpooner held the light close to the faces of the two men, and gave a grunt of surprise.

"H'm, they're asleep, sure enough, but it's a sleep they won't wake from in this world."

"What do you mean?" said Frank, springing up.

Nat understood Job's meaning only too well.

"He means," said he, "that the men have been frozen to death."

At this announcement fear took possession of the others. They did not know when the same fate might overtake them. The snow now let up some, and their spirits rose. The men again had recourse to their oars and the boat slowly made progress toward—what? They knew not where. Suddenly as Frank gave the rudder a twist it broke in half. Then a grating sound was heard on the bottom of the boat and a hole was stove through the bottom. They had struck an iceberg. Water was coming in fast. Suddenly they saw by the lantern's light that they were high and dry on the berg, so they all stepped out, hauling out their traps with them, when suddenly the boat lurched over on its side as a big wave struck it, and the bodies of Jim Brown and Sol were washed overboard.

Walking up farther on the berg, they set to work to make things comfortable by cutting holes in the ice and setting the oars and mast in and then spreading the sail over them as a tent. After this they set out around the berg on a tramp to explore it. Nothing was seen, however, but absolute desolation. Two days passed and then they discovered the berg was no longer drifting. They discovered they were frozen solid to a large field of it. They made up their minds that it was to their interest to push on, so making a sort of sled out of the ribs of the boat they set off, pulling the sled behind them. The next day they came upon a steep ascent, which they climbed, coming upon a remarkable sight. This was the dismasted hull of a ship standing bolt upright and covered thickly with ice and snow. Standing upon the bowsprit was an object which upon closer inspection proved to be the body of a man frozen in a solid chumk of ice. Nat now exclaimed:

"Let us go aboard and unravel this secret of the frozen deep!"

CHAPTER IV.—The Secret Assumes Complications.

With hasty steps the four companions approached the solitary ship, and looked about them for a means of ascending. Upon one side, near the quarter, there was a mound of ice, from which to the deck a natural bridge had been formed, and across this they soon made their way, standing at last where no human foot had trod for many years. The snow lay thick upon the deck, and the stumps of masts were masses of snow-covered ice, looking like sheeted specters keeping guard over the secrets of the lonely ship. The hatches were closed and sealed hermetically by that icy hand whose presence could be felt everywhere about; but the cabin door was partly open, the snow having drifted in a great white heap down the companionway. How long the ship had remained here no one could tell, nor how many years that ghastly sentinel upon the prow, whose sightless orbs were gazing into the mist

and snow of this desolate region. Nat and his comrades walked forward, their footsteps creaking upon the crisp snow, the freezing wind howling about them and the pitiless sky frowning down upon them, with its ever leaden hue hanging like a gray pall over their heads. Not a sound broke the awful stillness, and the very silence seemed to be an argument against its being broken, but Nat, nevertheless, dispelled the gloom by saying cheerily:

"Don't be downhearted, boys. There's no reason why we should be frozen up, if this poor fellow has been. I propose to make the hull our home, and who knows but what we may find provisions and the means of making ourselves comfortable aboard. Let us search the old hulk by all means. Come on! Follow me!"

"I believe you're right," spoke up Chucks. "I am sorry for that poor fellow there, but we needn't get down in the mouth on that account."

Nat had reached the cabin door by this time, the ship being provided with a sort of quarter-deck, and he at once laid hold of the door to force it open. The snow and ice held it firmly, however, and it had to be demolished with the hatchet before they could make a place wide enough to pass through. There was a flight of half a dozen steps before them, and down they walked, Nat and Frank clearing the ice upon them away so that there would be no danger of slipping. In spite of this, Chucks slipped, and landing upon his rear with a thud, slid down the steps and half way across the outer cabin, bringing up against the bulkhead with a force that nearly stood him up straight again.

"Golly!" he ejaculated, when he recovered his breath, that expletive being a favorite with him; "that was a bouncer, and no mistake. If it had been you that slipped down, Job, you'd 'a' broken in two."

"You're right, old porpoise, but I'm not so clumsy as you, and don't go sliding around wherever I am."

The cabin appeared to be a commodious one, containing several sitting and state-rooms, and was fitted up with every convenience, several nautical instruments being observed upon the walls and laid away in lockers. Casting merely a cursory glance around the place, looking through the doors, observing the general disposition of the room, the party passed through a door in the bulkhead, and so on through the steerage, with its commodious storerooms on either side, thence to the men's quarters. The forecastle was a large one, and was fitted up with a great number of bunks, a dining table with racks overhead, a large stove, and many other conveniences.

Nat suddenly uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and holding up the lantern, which he had lit in order to better explore the place, pointed to one of the bunks. The others crowded about him, and, peering over his shoulder, they saw the skeleton of a man, dressed in sailor's garb lying in the berth. An examination disclosed five more of the ghastly evidences of the presence of man, but that was all.

"I see it all," said Nat, gravely; "the crew died, alone in these inhospitable regions, the captain had gone on deck to look for help, and you frozen

effigy above our heads is all that remains of a once gallant commander."

Every Arctic explorer knows the necessity of keeping the officers and crew amused and entertained; consequently this vessel had taken a small library along, made up in a manner to suit every taste. Frank had noticed a case filled with numerous volumes in the cabin, but no particular attention had been paid to them at the time, the cabin being left for after inspection. Nat looked into the storerooms, and found several barrels of beef and pork, a large quantity of canned meats, soups, vegetables, and preserves, all of which seemed to be in good condition, and he wondered greatly why the men should have starved to death, as they evidently had, when there was enough and to spare for all their wants. The forecastle hatch was found to have been secured strongly upon the inside, and Nat had no doubt that if the snow and ice above them were removed, it would be found that the hatch had been battened down.

There was nothing startling about this, as it had probably been done for reasons of safety and to retain all the heat in the forecastle, the men passing through the cabin when they desired to go on deck.

Nat, therefore, expressed no surprise that the forecastle should have been closed from the deck. The fact of there being a free passage leading to the cabin, which in most vessels is separated entirely from the rest of the vessel, and all means of communication shut off, being positive proof that the captain treated his crew, after their long imprisonment in the ice began, as so many comrades, treating all alike. In the lower hold they found a considerable quantity of wood and coal, sufficient to last all winter, and this was another cause of the strange secret which was entombed in the heart of the silent watcher upon the bowsprit, keeping his fruitless lookout amid snow and ice.

"I can understand why the captain should have been overtaken suddenly by some fierce blast as he stood there trying to discover something, we know not what," observed Nat, "and that being instantly paralyzed, he had frozen to death as he stood, without the power to move hand or foot. All this I can explain, but why these men should have perished with so much at their command is a secret."

"And there's only six of them," muttered Job; "which with the captain makes seven, hardly enough to make a ship's complement, by any means."

"There is more of a secret about the ship than at first appeared, but I am resolved to know everything, if that is possible."

"Good for you, Nat!" grunted the ruddy Chucks. "Supposing that you find out all you want to, what are you going to do then?"

"Spend the winter here, and then, as we have advanced so far, build a boat out of the remains of this ship and start for the open Polar Sea and the North Pole."

"How in time are you going to build a boat?" asked Chucks, open-mouthed.

"There are axes and saws, hammers, adzes, nails and rivets in abundance right here," answered Nat. "All we want is willing hands,

brave hearts, and patient endurance, and with these the work is already begun."

"Hurrah for North Pole Nat!" shouted Job. "I vote we make him our captain! What d'ye say?"

"Ay, ay!" they all shouted, and Nat was unanimously chosen to that most important position.

CHAPTER V.—The Captain Abandoned.

Let us return for a while to the Arctic Fox and see what has happened since Nat's disappearance. At the time that Mr. Cartwright's boat was seen to be falling behind, a squall struck the bark, the same which afterwards came upon the captain's boat. The shipkeeper, fearing that the crew on board would be insufficient to manage her, signaled to one of the boats to return, the order being observed by the waistboat in command of the second mate, Mr. Jones. His crew, with the assistance of those already on board, succeeded in managing the bark and took in sail, the boats of the first and second mates being still in the water. Ed Lewis then went to the masthead again and signaled all the boats to return, in accordance with a plan entered into between him and Mr. Cartwright, previous to setting out. The mate allowed the second mate to pass him, and then returned to the vessel.

At that time the captain's boat was being towed by the whale—a fact well known to Lewis, notwithstanding that he had signaled for the return to the ship. The third mate, Mr. Wright, being favorable to the captain, did not know of the plot against him, and seeing that the captain made no signs of returning, continued upon his course.

"The whales have disappeared, Mr. Cartwright," said Lewis, coming down from aloft, "and I have signaled for the captain to return."

"Has he done so?"

"No, sir."

"Stand on a bit, Ed, and we will await him till nightfall; after that we must take care of ourselves, as the new ice is making fast, and we are in great danger of being caught."

This was said in order that there might seem to be a sufficient excuse for the abandonment of the captain if ever the case came up afterwards. The Arctic Fox was presumably standing on to be ready to take up the other boats, but in reality she was making little headway, the helmsman having been given a course to steer which amounted to little else than laying to.

"You'd better go up again, Ed," said Mr. Cartwright half an hour after his arrival on board, "and see if they are not returning."

"Ay, ay, sir!" said the man, giving a wink to his superior which the latter fully understood, mounted to the crosstrees, glass in hand.

After a long look he suddenly shouted:

"Mr. Wright's boat has swamped sir, struck by a squall."

The third mate's boat had swamped, but not for the reason given by the treacherous shipkeeper, the real state of the case being that the smaller whale, in sounding, had changed his course, coming directly for the other boat, and

rising under it. It was thrown into the air to a considerable height and stove all to pieces, the men flying over one another's heads in great confusion. The officer was struck by the heavy line tub and forced under water, being insensible from the blow. The harpooner got entangled in the line and was drawn under, and utterly unable to extricate himself, was drowned, the same fate meeting two of the seamen who had never learned to swim—not a rare thing in many old sailors. The other two men seized a pair of oars apiece and kept themselves afloat upon the ice, but as for any hope of being picked up, they might just as well have given up the idea and suffered themselves to be drowned. Ed Lewis came down and reported the true state of the case to the mate, saying that the two seamen appeared to be still floating upon the waves.

"Let 'em float and be cussed to 'em!" growled the mate. "We're rid of 'em! Ahoy, there! Make ready to go in stays!" he shouted to the sailors gathered forward.

The men looked at one another, and one old tar advanced and touched his hat, saying:

"Are you going to put about, sir, when the skipper is still out?"

"Do as I tell you!" thundered the mate. "You old fool, I command this vessel, and I mean to be obeyed! Fly around there lively! Don't you see we're all aback?"

The men flew to their tasks and put the vessel about, all except the old man and his adherents, who did nothing.

"Come aft here, Tom Bunt!" said the mate, when the maneuver had been successfully accomplished, and the man obeyed.

"Why d'ye mean by this mutiny against my authority?" demanded Cartwright.

"It isn't mutiny, sir, but I didn't like to see the captain left alone, when there's every chance of his being picked up."

"There is, is there? Didn't you hear the shipkeeper say his boat has foundered?"

"No, sir, I didn't, and she ain't! I saw her myself, this very minute towed by the big whale, and Job Hawkins makin' a second dart."

"Look here you old reprobate, you're an old sailor and a good one, which makes what you say reasonable, but you don't know everything. If any other man had acted so he'd have gone in irons right away."

"I only did what I thought right, sir."

"Who told you to think? Mutiny ain't right, whatever you can say. Mr. Jones, put these men in irons," pointing to Tom's followers. "You shall escape this time, Tom, but let me tell you to be careful. I am captain here now."

"But the skipper, sir?"

"The skipper is dead. Do you see that ice making all about us? The skipper can't reach us, and if we wait we'll be lost. He chose to disobey the signal to return, and must take the consequences. Now go below."

Tom obeyed reluctantly, not at all satisfied with the turn affairs had taken, feeling confident that the captain might have been picked up. The two sailors floating alone on the sea saw the white wings of the bark turn about, and the vessel sped away from them, and knew that they

were without any hope. The clouds shut in between them, and nothing was to be seen of vessel or boat, and they groaned in their agony of spirit, knowing that their case was a hopeless one. The icy waters chilled them to the bone, and already that fatal drowsiness, which is the forerunner of death, was upon them.

"Cheer up, Jack," said one. "The skipper will be coming along pretty soon."

Poor Jack tried to smile, but his numb hands were already slipping from his frail support, and before his comrade could aid him, he had dropped off into the sea and sank out of sight. The lone sailor made a grab for him, but he merely succeeded in catching the oars, which formed a better support for himself. Alone in the darkness, the snow falling thickly around him, he drifted along with the tide, scarcely knowing he lived, while the ice began to surge about him, and threatened to crush him from its jagged sides. He was conscious of being struck by something, and reaching out, seized it with one hand.

It was the steering oar lost from the captain's boat, and made a valuable addition to his raft. His clothes were waterproof, and as very little moisture had penetrated, he was not in as much danger as he might have been had he been wet through the water being warmer than the outer air. Some time in the night he was conscious of crawling upon a cake of ice and drawing the oars up after him, so as not to come in direct contact with the ice. Then, utterly exhausted, he fell asleep and knew no more, drifting along in the ice-choked current, helpless and alone. On board the Arctic Fox the mate had assumed command, and was holding a consultation in his stateroom with Mr. Jones and the shipkeeper in regard to their future movements.

"There is no doubt that we can make Baffin's Bay, and thence take the current down and make land," he was saying.

"Does the current run south at this time?" asked Jones.

"Certainly, and won't be choked with ice. We can get out easy enough, and if we don't, we can make some point either in Greenland or British America."

"The current sets against us now," remarked Lewis, "and I believe we're making sternway all the time."

"Nonsense! We're making six knots, and by frequent tacking can make more. The wind's against us, that's bad, but with our sharp cut-water and strong bows, the ice won't bother us much."

They were not as safe as they supposed, for during the night the man on the lookout fell asleep, and ten minutes later the vessel crashed into an iceberg, carrying away her bowsprit and three feet of her bows. A mass of ice, weighing several tons, becoming detached from the berg, fell upon her deck and completed the work of destruction, the bark foundering in ten minutes, being buoyed up for a while by the berg, upon one part of which she had slid for several feet. Thus did a horrible fate stare in the faces of the men who had so heartlessly abandoned their kind captain.

CHAPTER VI.—Chucks Makes A Discovery.

At the first crash Cartwright rushed upon deck, and seeing what had happened, ordered the two boats, with the spare ones on the house, to be lowered at once, and as much water and provisions put in them as was possible under the circumstances. The larboard and waist boats were lowered, and into them scrambled Cartwright, Jones, Ed. Lewis, the carpenter, cook, and a dozen seamen, when they were pulled away with all possible speed. Cartwright secured the nautical instruments, two kegs of water, some cooked meat, and a keg of hardtack, Jones seeing that his boat was equally well supplied with provisions. No one thought of the men below in irons, and they were left to their fate, many sharing the same fortune, as in the hurry and confusion one of the spare boats was capsized while being lowered. Two or three of the sailors got off the wooden cover of the tryworks and made an extemporized raft of it, putting on a barrel of water and provisions, which they lashed as firmly as they could, taking a pair of oars to guide their queer craft. Old Tom Bunt scrambled out upon the ice none too soon, for the bark settled immediately afterward, and more than a dozen souls were lost. The boats—the officers unheeding the cries of the men to be saved—put off into the current, leaving the poor wretches to be drowned or float upon the ice.

Little did Cartwright care whether they were saved or not, as long as he was secure, and he actually struck one poor fellow over the head as he clung to the gunwale of the boat, and pushed him into the sea. When morning came, the three traitors found themselves on the shores of an almost desolate coast, the ice fast closing in, and a howling tempest of mingled snow and sleet prevailing. They hauled their boats upon the shore, and turning them up, got under their lee and remained there until the storm abated, which was not until late in the afternoon.

"The winter has set in," said Cartwright, the next morning, when he arose and looked about him; "and in spite of all our efforts, we must remain here for nine long, dreary months."

"I don't see as it can be helped now," muttered Jones.

"I have a plan."

"What is it?"

"The Esquimaux and Indians of these parts are not over friendly to the whites, and I don't propose to trust them, but up north I know of a ship where we can remain in safety."

"A ship?"

"Yes—abandoned in the ice in the region of perpetual snow. She is well supplied, and will afford us a shelter from the winds."

"And after that?"

"After that we can make our way over the waters of Kane Bay, or some other channel, to land and get a ship."

"It's a hard outlook!"

"But the only one. Let's drag our boats thither and secure a shelter at once."

"It is two or three hundred miles at least."

"And can be accomplished in ten days at the outside."

Some of the men demurred, and four or five set out alone on foot toward the south, determined to risk finding a shelter in that direction rather than go further north. The next morning their bodies were found, frozen stiff, by a party of Esquimaux. Cartwright prevailed on this same party to provide them with sledges, and he and his comrades, with six men besides, started out on their perilous journey.

"What is the name of the ship you expect to find?" asked Jones, on the morning of the third day after their departure. "I had forgotten all about that until now."

"It is the Adventurer."

"What! The exploring vessel commanded by that mad—"

"Sh! Yes, it is the same.—I know where she lies, and though it is a rough journey, it is our only chance."

For the present we will leave the treacherous party, for whom a worse fate was prepared than that which befell the captain, and return to our hero up among the desolate regions, where the silent figure of the frozen captain stood guard over the abandoned ship. After Nat had been unanimously chosen the leader of the little band, he determined that they should return to the cabin and try and determine their position by the sextant.

"I am afraid we can't do that, my young friend," remarked Job, "for the sun don't shine for a cent."

"It will come out some day, anyhow, and if only for a minute, that will be long enough. You understand navigation?"

"Like a book."

"Then you shall teach me."

"With all my heart."

"And I will join the class also," spoke up Frank, his girlish face lighting up with a smile. "I'm bound to do everything that Nat does."

"Good enough!" yelled Chucks, slapping his fat sides. "I honestly believe you're in love with Nat."

Frank blushed deeply but made no reply, and by this time they were once more in the cabin.

"I'll tell you what you can do, Chucks," said Nat; "take one of the axes and clear away the ice from the stove-pipe hole up there aft."

"Well?"

"Then we'll rig up the pipe that's in the closet there, and we'll have a roaring fire in this stove in less than no time."

"Good enough! Golly! you're an artist, Nat! Who'd ever have thought of doing that?"

"You would if you weren't so fat," answered Job. "Nobody would ever feel cold that had such a furnace inside 'em as you're got. It's a wonder you don't melt the ice when you sit on it."

Chucks laughed with the rest, being remarkably goodnatured, and then went on deck to perform his allotted task. While he cleared away the hole, Nat put the stove in order, Frank brought in coal, and Job got the pipe, and with a sound ax cut enough wood from the lower hold forward to start a fire with. At last the hole was cleared; the pipe fitted, a roaring fire started in the stove by means of a flint and steel, and before long a slight warmth began to be perceptible in the place.. The deadeyes and port-

holes, being covered thickly with ice and snow, admitted no light, and they were dependent upon their lamps for illumination. The cabin was still quite cold, the thermometer standing at the freezing point, and quite a roaring fire had to be built before they could with safety take off their outer coverings.

"What was your father's name, Nat?" asked Chucks, presently, while Job was getting the coffee and Frank heating the water.

"Alonzo," answered Nat.

"Are you sure? Wasn't it N. Evans, New York," as if reading from something.

Nat observed the tone, and turned quickly to Chucks.

"Where do you see that?" he asked quickly.

"On this thermometer."

Nat went over to Chuck's side.

"Don't you see it here engraved on a plate?" It says, "N. Evans, New York."

Nat saw the name and made out a few words more on the plate. It was "Master of the Ship Adventurer."

"This instrument belonged to my father," then said Nat. "He set out to discover the North Pole, and we never heard from him afterwards."

"Then we are on the Adventurer now for the men's chests have the name on all of them."

Ned felt now that the body of the man on the bowsprit was that of his father, and his grief for a while was great. But after a while he conquered his grief and determined that the body encased in ice should remain where it was as a sort of guardian over the vessel.

After partaking of a hearty meal they set their chronometers, then the chart was spread out, when they found by observation that they were on the rocks, forced up by the ice, and that they were in danger when the ice broke up.

CHAPTER VII.—A Great Discovery.

Nat had been rummaging through the vessel and now came into the cabin.

"Come here, boys," said Nat, suddenly, "I have found the log of the Adventurer."

"Read it, Nat," said Job; "you may find a clew to the secrets of the place."

Having secured the closest attention, Nat cleared his throat and began the following romantic history, which we call:

The Cruise of the Adventurer

August 7, 1866.—We weighed anchor this afternoon and set sail from Cumberland Island, British North America, where we have been recruiting for the past two weeks. All promises well for our search, and I have no doubt that we shall reach a point far enough north to enable us to get to the open sea before the worst of the winter sets in. From there I shall not venture to take the vessel, but in the sectional boats shall launch out upon that still untravelled highway, the Polar Sea, and direct my course along the parallel of 70 degrees west longitude, straight to the North Pole. My crew is homogeneous, and, to a man, all will go in my project. Cartwright, in particular, seems to be thoroughly imbued with the idea of finding the Pole. I have never started

out under such bright auspices, and I seem to feel already that I have succeeded. May the future be as full of promise as the present.

August 18.—We have passed through Smith's Sound, and have seen icebergs. The ice is forming earlier than usual, but still I have hopes of being able to keep far enough north to carry out my project of wintering on the shores of the open sea.

August 20.—What do these strange foreodings mean? The men are becoming discontented, rebellious, almost mutinous. Someone is at work poisoning their minds against me. Of this I feel assured, but who is the man? The ice is growing alarmingly thick in the water, and sometimes we have great difficulty in getting through. We are now as far north as anyone has ever penetrated, but I am not satisfied with that, and am determined to go further. I have no such a good idea of Cartwright as I had, and I fear that he is the man who is setting the men against me. To-day I reasoned with him, but it did not seem to have any effect upon his hardened nature. Henceforth I shall beware of Cartwright.

When our hero had reached this point he paused from excitement, as well as from want of breath, for he had read in a rapid, nervous manner, which, although perfectly intelligible, excited the others more than it did himself.

"Golly, I wonder if that is the same Cartwright who was mate on the whaler?" said Chucks.

"Without doubt," said Nat; "the name is not a common one by any means."

"Besides that," said Frank, "he was with your father on his last voyage."

They all looked wonderingly at Frank as he uttered these words, and he blushed like a girl, saying quickly:

"So I have been told by those who knew Captain Evans."

"Why, Frank, my lad," said Nat, laughing, "you're a regular wonder book to me. I never knew you were acquainted with any of my father's friends, or that you knew anything concerning his voyages."

"Well, I don't know very much, but I know this that Mr. Cartwright bore your father no good-will, and there are those who told me he deserted the captain."

"The wretch! I'd like to get hold of him once," remarked Chucks. "Golly! I'd roast him over a slow fire instead of a hot one, like them Esquimaux what Frank tells about."

"Go ahead, Nat," said Frank, when the laughter had subsided, and Nat continued his reading:

August 31, 1866.—A cruel blow has fallen upon me. A day or so after the conversation with Cartwright, the ice became more difficult to pass, and I began to feel alarmed. I would have started earlier than I did, but Cartwright delayed me at Cumberland Island over a week, and I should not have been there two days, at most. I can now see his motive plainly, and I am confident that he never intended I should reach the Pole. He didn't dare kill me, for that was a step which his wicked companions would not take. They would have had no hesitation in abandoning me, but to kill me outright was more than

they cared to do, though I believe Cartwright would have attempted it, had he not been afraid they would avenge my murder. It was noon, and I had just taken an observation, finding to my intense surprise and gratification that we were in north latitude 84, two degrees higher than any recorded journey ever made.

I had gone below to enter this in my regular log, when I heard a confused murmur upon deck, the sound of voices now and again rising above the tumult. Filled with a grave apprehension which I dared not express in words, I hastily armed myself with a cutlass, and rushed upon deck. A strange sight met my gaze, which for a moment nearly paralyzed me. Arranged on one side of the deck were all but seven or eight of my crew, led by the arch traitor Cartwright, well armed and evidently desperate. On the other side were the few who remained faithful, and, though they were but a handful, they appeared fully as determined as their opponents, in spite of the disparity in their numbers.

"What means this disturbance?" I asked.

Cartwright stepped forward and thus addressed me, his proud lips curling with scorn:

"It means that fifty odd and more lives are not to be sacrificed to the whims of a mad visionary. It means that we are determined to go no further north. It means that unless our demands are complied with quietly we shall enforce our demands by force of arms."

"This is mutiny!" I cried, enraged, never fearing them, though they far outnumbered me and my still faithful followers. Had they been a hundred, and not a single man remained true to me, I would not have feared them.

"Call it what you please," sneered the traitor. "We are the stronger and you must submit."

They threw themselves headlong upon us, and a tremendous struggle ensued, during which two of my party were slain, and I received a wound, so that I am still weak from loss of blood. So gallantly did my men behave that though our loss was but two, that of the enemy were seven killed and more than that badly wounded, showing that the fight if not the might was upon our side. Presently Cartwright called a truce, and said he would give me one more day to decide. To this we all agreed, but in the night, midway in the morning watch, there came a great shock, and running up to see what had happened, I found that the ship had run into a solid mass of ice which immediately closed all around us! We were lost!

CHAPTER VIII.—Murdered and Abandoned.

I could not tell whether the helmsman had steered the vessel purposely upon the ice or not, but it was evident enough that he had, in the jib-boom broken off short, and the mainmast badly sprung. There was nothing to be done but to wait till the morning, so I gave a few general orders and returned to my cabin. When the sun rose and shone through the hole, I went on deck, finding that I had less time than usual. On all sides I saw the ice, a white, glittering mass, now fast to fast here and there, and away in the distance a huge iceberg. I called aloud for someone to come on deck, but there

was no answer, and in a moment the truth began to dawn upon me. I had been abandoned! Rushing down to the cabin, I now, for the first time, perceived a strong odor of chloroform, and a hasty search revealed a bottle of the stuff lying in my berth close to my pillow. I gazed at the chronometer and saw that there was but an hour or so of daylight remaining, and that I had slept several hours beyond my time.

The chloroform explained this, and I did not doubt that Cartwright had administered the drug as I lay asleep. Throwing open the cabin door so that the fresh air might enter, I passed through the forecastle for the purpose of ascertaining if the men had been drugged in the same manner as myself, never doubting that Cartwright had served us all the same way. When I opened the forecastle door, which was quite tight and impervious to draughts, a heavy, sickening odor greeted my nostrils. The air was charged with carbonic acid, and I felt so faint that I returned to the cabin, leaving the doors open so that a strong draught swept through the ship. I hastened upon deck, and found that there was still time to take an observation.

Trembling with excitement, I worked the reckoning, and found that I had reached 86 degrees north. The remainder of the journey could be easily made in a week, or even if it took a month, what was that? We had our boats and also balloons. Hurrying to the storeroom where they were kept, what was my horror to find that it had been broken open. Every balloon, every sectional boat, every spare oar and mast, and a large supply of provisions had been taken, and I felt myself overcome. After a while I grew calmer, and then returned to the forecastle, the noxious odor having somewhat abated. To my surprise I found my six faithful comrades lying in bed, and I called to them to rouse themselves.

Suddenly an awful suspicion crossed my mind. I threw open the door of the little stove which gave heat to the place; the fire was out, but the truth dawned upon me at once. The poor fellows had been killed by the fumes of charcoal with which Cartwright had filled the stove.

September 10, 1866.—I am utterly alone! I have no doubt that Cartwright has made his way to the south, but it may be that he has gone on, and having made that discovery which mankind has been striving to make since the earliest times, has returned, flushed with triumph.

September 20.—There is no hope. I have been every day to my station on the bowsprit to see if I can discover any opening in the ice, but without success. There is food in abundance, and had I a companion, I should be entirely contented, but this terrible loneliness is wearing upon me, and I fear will bring on a fit of sickness, which I dread more than anything.

October 1, 1866.—It is very cold, and I keep the fire burning, though it does not burn well at this elevation. I shall have to go up and down here in the dark. I know I am getting weak, and pale. I cannot get to sleep to speak, for what can I do? Besides, I have the back for the body, I tell myself, and that I have got to help to get out. I have got to then go on deck to see what I can see through the glass. May the good Lord watch over my soul. Nat, and if I

may, in spite of my ardent hopes of seeing once more my own home, I trust that he who made me will guard the boy aright, and bring him to manhood. It is my wish that he follow up the researches I have made, and, if it is possible, reach the Pole. There is a considerable treasure in this ship, and if any man should find it, I charge him to give it to my son, if living, and if not, to use it only for the purpose of making further researches. The villains would have taken that, had they knew where it was, but it is still safe, and shall remain so until I am delivered, or my son hears of my fate.

Frank took Nat's hand and said: "Never mention Cartwright's name in my presence."

"What do you mean?"

"That the scoundrel is my father!"

"Impossible!"

"Not so!"

"But your name is Frank Trafton!"

"It is Francis Trafton Cartwright, and I am the son of a murderer!"

He seemed about to faint, and Nat sprang forward to assist him. With a strange cry he repelled the young man and summoning all his strength, rushed out of the cabin and upon the deck.

CHAPTER IX.—Frank Makes A Revelation.

Nat ran upon deck, and found Frank standing by the rail of the stranded ship, gazing out upon the dreary landscape.

"What is the matter, old fellow?" he asked, soothingly, for he had taken a great fancy to the lad, and did not like to see him in distress.

"Nothing, now," answered Frank. "I felt faint, but that has passed away since I came out here."

"I say you are the son of that vi— of Mr. Cartwright?"

"Yes. You hate me for it; I am sure you do— me, and—"

"No, no, Frank, I don't; I like you better than any boy I ever knew. It is not your fault that you are the son of this man. Believe me, I have no wish to visit the sins of the father upon his child."

"I was charged by my father to compass your death, and I promised to do it."

Nat retreated a pace or two, not in fear, but from surprise.

"You promised that," he said.

"Yes, but then I did not know you, did not like you as I do now. Believe me, I would protect you now with my last drop of blood."

The boy's voice was as tender and soft as a woman's, and his large, expressive eyes were ready to overflow with tears.

"And you promised your father that you would kill my life?"

"Yes, but I will not keep it, for now I know what a monster he is. Let him beware, if ever we meet again!"

"Why should he wish to have me killed?"

"It is a long story."

"Will you tell it?"

"Yes, but no one else must hear the recital. You've a right to know what to be prepared for, but I have not confidence the story to anyone else."

"It is not nearly as cold as it was, suppose we take a walk across the ice, we can easily find our way back, for we will not go far."

Nat and Frank made their way down and started off together across the ice. The solitary guardian of their icebound vessel could be seen at a great distance, and there was no danger of their getting lost if they kept him in sight.

"My father still watches over me," observed Nat, turning around to look at the figure, "and I cannot but feel that this block of ice, which is all that remains of him, will be of more protection than I imagine."

Away scudded the two boys over the crisp snow, their merry laughter ringing upon the air and awakening the echoes which doubtless never before had heard the welcome sound. Frank reached a slight rise before Nat and standing upon the highest point threw snowballs at Nat as he came up. Our hero scrambled up to the top of the knoll, and then when both were seated, Nat with his arm around Frank to keep him from falling, he said:

"Now, then, my boy, let me hear your story, and be assured that, no matter what others may feel against you, I have no hard feeling toward you."

"The first time I heard anything about Captain Evans," said Frank, "was about four years ago, when my father used frequently to talk about his Arctic explorations. He ridiculed the man, and said that the North Pole would never be found; that it was impossible, and that the people might as well give up the idea at once.

"When I discovered afterwards that he had sailed with this same Captain Evans, I thought it very strange, and could not account for the change. However, I presumed that he had been made a good offer, and that on that account he had consented to lay aside his prejudices.

"The preceding voyage had not been a good one, and he had lost considerable money, as had many other whalers. As he now had a certainty, I did not doubt that he was perfectly willing to change his views, and do for money what he had before ridiculed, set out to find the North Pole.

"When I next saw him, he said that Evans was probably dead, that their vessel had been caught in the ice, and that he, and the head of a party sent to find relief, had been captured by Indians.

"He had spent the winter with them, he said, and had then been rescued by a party of his own countrymen, after which he had sailed for home. Only three or four of his comrades had escaped, and he told a pitiful story of the cruel hardships they had suffered in the frozen regions of the north.

"He did not seem altogether satisfied in his mind that his old captain was dead; and I often fancied that he meant to go north and ascertain. He said that they had been separated, and that maybe Evans was still safe, as such things had been known as men passing the severe northern winter in safety and resuming their voyages in the spring.

"Time passed, and people generally began to forget the Arctic explorer, though Cartwright did not, and talked of him constantly. When he

agreed on the voyage with Captain Hathaway, he told me that I was to go as cabin-boy, he having made all arrangements.

"That young Nat Evans will be aboard, Frank," he said, "and I want you to look out for him. His father ruined me, and this young cub will try and do the same."

"I was astonished, and asked what he meant, being informed in reply that Evans plotted against him, had maligned his character, and caused not only his financial ruin, but had made it impossible for him to hold up his head in good society.

"He has dishonored me, and his son stands where you ought to be," he continued. "Only blood can wipe out the offense, and if you are a true child of mine you will kill this brat of his at the first opportunity."

"I was known as Frank Trafton, and no one supposed me to be his son, the captain even having been told that I was merely a boy that the mate knew and wanted to befriend. From hating you, as I have done after hearing his story, I began to hate him instead, and swore that nothing should harm you.

"He probably fears you because he imagines that you may somehow learn of his treachery to your father, and that is why he wishes you out of the way. He is a villain, and I hope we may never meet again, for I disown him, and will denounce him for his villainy. You are my best friend, Nat, and I will stand by you till the last."

"I know it, my lad; and now suppose we go back to the hip."

CHAPTER X.—A Cry In the Night.

For the next four or five days the icebound comrades were busily occupied in making their winter home more thoroughly comfortable even than it was already, although there had as yet been no cause for complaint.

They had seen neither men nor animals since their arrival, and the solemn silence was never broken, save by their own cheerful voices. All this, however, was to be changed, and their quiet, happy life was to be broken in upon by a harsh, discordant element which they would have done much to keep out. November came in, and now the night was perpetual, the aurora being the only thing which served to break the monotony of the long darkness. The snow continued to fall, at intervals, and occasionally it was found necessary to dig a passage through it from the cabin door to the ship's rail. The doors had been made to open inward, and as there were two sets, whatever snow might have drifted past the first was prevented from going any farther by the second, the outer ones serving the same purpose as storm-dores in our city houses.

The deck of the vessel was covered to a considerable depth with the snow, and fearing lest it might be crushed by the weight, Nat and his companions shoveled away the extra quantities which had fallen since their arrival, throwing it over the side of the vessel and building a regular inclined railway down to the ice. The supply chests were overhauled, and the warmest clothing brought out and thoroughly aired, so that

no dampness should cling to it, after which our party proceeded to make use of whatever they required. Frank occasionally wore the poor captain's great fur-lined coat and an extra hood with a high conical peak to it, in which attire he looked like a merry specimen of some curious tribe of animals, half bear and half human.

"You look like a ghost in bearskins," laughed Chucks, the coat and hood being of white fur, "and if I didn't know you, I think I should be almost scared."

"Hark!" said Frank, suddenly, in an impressive tone.

"What's the matter?" asked Nat.

"I hear someone calling."

"Blowed if I don't hear something myself," said Job; "but it might be the wind."

There was a silence for several minutes, not a word being spoken, but every ear strained to hear the repetition of the sound, which, as yet, Frank alone had heard.

"Halloo, halloo, halloo!"

"There it is again!" said Chucks, "and there is someone answering them. Hold on! What do you make out of that other sound? I'll tell you it's a pack of snarling Spitz dogs."

"Then there is a party of Esquimaux in sledges," said Frank, hastily. "The ice below here is now smooth enough on account of the snow for them to travel over. They will be here shortly."

"Go below, then, every man," said Nat. "Let us hope they may not see us. These wretches are capable of any treachery when they outnumber the whites. If they do find us out we can defend ourselves."

They all hurried below, the outer and inner doors being both securely fastened with heavy bars that had been made for that purpose.

"Now, let us consider," said the young leader, when they had all gathered below. "If they attack us, what means of defense have we?"

"I have got that big brass bomb-gun," said Chucks. "I reckon I can give 'em a surprise with that."

"I've got an axe," added Frank.

"So have I, and Job has his harpoon. They can't break in, and if they do we will give them a warm reception."

"Suppose we sit down quietly, as we would under any other circumstances," said Nat, "and not worry until we actually hear them."

This was done, and an hour passed away very pleasantly, Frank reading aloud and the others making an occasional remark concerning the book he read. They had well-nigh forgotten their cause of alarm, when there suddenly came a pounding at the outer doors, and a voice was heard saying:

"If you are honest men within this ship, open your doors to a poor traveler!"

Nat sprang up, crossed the cabin, ascended the steps, and before letting down the bar, asked:

"How many are you?"

"Two, both whites. Let us in, for the love of heaven; we are well-nigh exhausted."

Nat's friends had gathered below him upon the steps, and he now opened the door, the light from the cabin showing him the forms of two men standing outside.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed.

"North Pole Nat, as I'm a sinner!" said the foremost of the men.

"Mr. Cartwright!" gasped Nat. "I thought you had perished. This is an unexpected meeting, sir; but you can never tell what may happen in these regions."

CHAPTER XI.—Cartwright Tells His Story.

It was indeed a fact that Cartwright, the mate of the Arctic Fox, stood before Nat and his companions.

"Well, you did get ashore, didn't you?" he asked. "Where is the old man?"

"Drowned."

"Well, I've had a hard blow myself," muttered the man. "You look so comfortable down here; won't you let me in?"

"I could not refuse a dog shelter on such a night as this. Come in, Mr. Cartwright; I won't say 'and welcome,' for that would not be the truth."

"What d'ye mean, lad?" growled the man, turning red in the face.

"I do not need to explain when you shall know the name of this ship, and whose body is outside, all snow and ice."

Cartwright and Jones entered the cabin.

"If you are very cold, you had better not go too near the fires at first, sir," said Nat, warningly; "the change will be too sudden."

Cartwright sat upon a locker against the further side of the cabin, and kicking off his heavy boots, removed his hood, mittens and thick outer garments, Jones doing the same.

"Hallo, Frank, you're alive, are you? I was sorry they let you go in the boat, and if I'd 've known it, you wouldn't 've. It's all right now, though," giving the lad a peculiar side glance, which the boy understood only too well.

"I have been with friends, sir, and have suffered for nothing," returned the lad, quietly.

"That's more than I can say then, for of all that were in the vessel, only me and Jones are left. We got caught in the ice, were smashed by an iceberg, and starting on foot across country, half of our party were frozen to death, some died, and the rest—well, I don't know what became of them."

"How did you happen to miss us?" asked Nat.

"The skipper signalled us to come back, as the whale had gone down and night was coming on."

We were fast, and the whale never sank until after we were obliged to cut loose, the captain having been entangled in the line and drawn overboard."

"We didn't see you, and as the shipkeeper had told us to come back, after that we lay on for a while, and then the clouds set in all around us, and began to snow. We hung about all night, and in the morning the ice closed in on us, and we were left out. Then an iceberg fell on us and stove the ship to pieces."

"Did you look for us in the morning?" asked Jones, who did not altogether believe the plausible tale of the skipper.

"Yes, and we had a good deal to look out for

ourselves. Wright was dead, and half the men were so badly hurt that they could not work. Some had been killed when the iceberg fell, and some were sick. We got together all our party and encamped on the ice for a day, and then set out to reach shore. The sun was hidden and we couldn't tell which way to go, having lost our ship's and boat compasses. We made a start at last, and traveled for several days, the men dropping off one by one from exhaustion and the bitter cold.

"Tom Bunt, stoke oar of Mr. Jones' boat and one or two others of the older seamen were the first to go, and we buried them in the ice so the wolves wouldn't get at them, for they began to annoy us greatly, and hung on our tracks day and night.

"We had managed to save some provisions and three or four casks of water, and we shot a polar bear, so that we were well off for food. We rigged a shelter at night and slept tolerably comfortable, but the terrible weather was picking us off one by one, and we prayed constantly for shelter. We were in the worst way for the want of a shelter, and I believe more men died just on that account than there would otherwise. At last after a week or more of traveling we came upon an Esquimau village and there we were made comfortable. We had plenty to eat and a warm place to sleep at night. I was satisfied to stay there all winter, but the men wanted to push ahead, and so, after staying in the igloos for several days, the Esquimaux furnished us with sledges and dogs, and off we started for the north."

"For the north?" cried Nat. "You surely could not hope to find shelter and friends in the north while the winter lasted?"

"The Esquimaux told us of a ship away up in towards the Pole, in a region where the ice never melts, which had been abandoned and which would afford us a home for the winter. They had seen it, they said, for it had been there many years, and they were sure we would find it a good home. Hence we went north, and after a long search, found the ship, though we did not suppose there would be anybody aboard of her, and above all, so cozily settled."

"You did not know what the vessel was?"

"No."

All four of the comrades exchanged silent glances, and the villain began to feel very uneasy.

"And your journey here, was it a hard one?" asked Nat.

"Yes. - What didn't die were either taken prisoners by the treacherous Esquimaux or wandered off, half crazy, and were lost or died from exposure, I don't know which. Ed Lewis, the shipkeeper, was with us, but he strayed away and I never knew what became of him."

"Finally our dogs ran away with the sledges and provisions and everything and left us to make the rest of the journey on foot. That was four days ago, and since then we have scarcely tasted food or drink, and when we came across the ship were almost too worn out to climb up the side. The smoke from the fire, and the smoke coming out of them pipes just did our hearts good."

"Chucks! Bring out some cold meat and bread."

and put on a pot of coffee," said Nat; and as the jolly cook bestirred himself, he continued, addressing Cartwright:

"To such care and attention as you need in your present plight, and which we can give, you have a right, but do not expect more than that. You must be perfectly aware what this ship is; but to be more explicit, I will tell you. She is called the Adventurer."

"Indeed! I suppose you found her logs, or something which gave you that information?"

"Did you ever hear of her before?" asked Job.

"Not that I know of. Was she a whaler?"

"She was an arctic exploring vessel, commanded by one Nathan Evans, of New York—my father. Did you ever know him?"

"I have heard of him," replied Cartwright, carelessly, "but I can't say as I ever had the pleasure of his acquaintance."

"There is no need of you telling any more falsehoods, Mr. Cartwright, for I am aware of the whole truth of this matter," said Nat, firmly. "I know that you were the mate of this vessel, that you abandoned my father and his six comrades to a dreadful fate; that you smothered those six sailors in their beds, and—"

"It's a lie!" yelled Cartwright, with a remarkable degree of energy for a starving man, springing from the table. "They smothered themselves. Nat Evans was a fool to go so far north, anyhow, and I warned him more than once."

"I am acquainted with the whole history of the case, sir, and you can tell me nothing. Why you have returned to this ship, I cannot say, unless for shelter, as you affirm. That you can have, but understand plainly, you are here only from suffering, and because I would not treat you as you treated your old captain. I have some kindness in me, and I wish to see no one suffer. You may stay here until Spring, but no later. Whatever you need you shall have, but understand me—I know all your plans! Beware, then, how you seek to carry them out!"

firmly fixed to be affected by any but a regular gale, nor was it the howling of the storm outside. He was now fully awake, and the sound being repeated, he knew that he had not been dreaming. With a vague foreboding at his heart, he arose hastily, drew on a portion of his clothing, and unlocking the door carefully, crept noiselessly along the main cabin toward the companionway, taking an ax from his fastening as he went. Suddenly, as he crouched in the dim light of the place, for one lamp was always kept burning, he heard a voice just outside the door stationed at the foot of the stairs leading to the deck. The door was slightly ajar, and peering through he saw the figure of a man at the top of the steps, evidently talking with someone on the outside. The man was Cartwright, the treacherous mate!"

"Hist, Ned! The plaguey boy has put a padlock on the door, and I can't let you in."

"You must! I will freeze to death out here!"

The voice was that of Ed Lewis, the shipkeeper of the Arctic Fox, whom Cartwright had reported as dead or missing. Truly, there was some mystery here, the key to which might unfathom some deep and danger plot.

"You're under the lee of the ship, ain't you?"
"Yes."

"And got the sledges and lots of bearskins and a dozen greasy Esquimaux to lie between, haven't you?"

"Yes."

"Then what are you growling about?"

A perfect flood of revelations had been made during the few minutes occupied by that conversation. The shipkeeper and a dozen Esquimaux outside, with dogs and sledges; Cartwright swearing to kill his own son; [redacted] on foot to put Ned out of the way. These, and a dozen other things suggested, if not plainly told, the position might well be called a critical one. Nat determined to put an end to the parley at once. Throwing open the door, he cried:

"Mr. Cartwright, I think it is about time you went back to bed."

The man was perfectly thunderstruck, for he had no idea but what Ned was fast asleep, dreaming the dreams of the just. He turned around suddenly and glared at the lad as if he would kill him with a look.

"Hold on, Ned," said the scoundrel. "I've got a young fighting-cock here what I'm going to lick, and then I'll let you in."

He came down the stairs, and Nat retreated, not from fear, but in order to get an advantage over the wretch. Cartwright came rushing down the stairs and into the cabin, and then Nat, slamming the doors, and standing with his back braced against them, raised his ax in a threatening attitude. Cartwright made a dash at Nat, but the boy brandished his ax in altogether too careless a fashion to suit him, and he soon got out of the way of its sharp edge.

"Hallo, here, Jones!" he yelled; "come out here and help me tame this young cub; he's getting too frisky to live, and needs lashing."

Quickly unfastening the bar in its place over the door, Nat left his station, and forcing the [redacted] way from the [redacted] passage, he closed it, and then stood against it.

"Now, my friend, as you won't do for the ask-

CHAPTER XII.—Nat on His Guard—A Midnight Visitor.

Nat spoke these words quietly but firmly, and the man to whom they were addressed could not but understand their full meaning. He saw that it would be useless to get mad or bluster, so he said nothing, merely sitting in silence, with his head between his hands. After the two unwelcome guests had retired, the others enjoyed an hour or so of pleasant conversation and instructive reading, generally being about as good a topic as you can have. The chronometer at last marked ten o'clock, and Nat, arising from his seat, said:

"Bedtime, boys. Be off with you, and if any of you hear any suspicious noises in the night, report to headquarters."

Two hours or so had passed, he did not know exactly how long it was, when Nat suddenly awoke with a strange feeling upon him. He had thought he heard a rattling sound, as of someone trying to enter the cabin, and then a noise like the pounding upon the door. It was not the wind, he was sure of that, for the doors were too

ing, we shall have to force you," said Nat, determinedly. "Hallo, Job, Frank, Chucks! Come out here!"

Job had already heard the disturbance, and fancying that all was not right, had arisen, and began to dress himself; so when he heard Nat's summons, he hastily completed his arrangements, and came out, followed in half a minute by Frank.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

Nat told him, giving him a full but concise account of the conversation with the man outside, and of Cartwright's refusal to go back to his room. At this moment Chucks appeared, and took in the scene at a glance.

"Just leave him to me," he said, with a broad grin. "Open the door, Nat, and if that other fellow comes out, brain him."

Nat opened the door and stood ready to floor Jones if he should come out; but the latter, considering discretion the better part of valor, remained in the privacy of his room. Then Chucks made one sudden dive at the mate, and striking him in the stomach with his bullet head, doubled him up completely, landing him in a helpless mass at the further end of the room. After accomplishing this much he picked the man up as though he had been a child, and carrying him to his room, dumped him head first in the barrel of water standing in one corner. Leaving the wretch to extricate himself as best he might, the valiant Chucks then locked the door on the outside, and fastening Jones in as well, gave the keys to Nat.

"Let us hold a council of war," said Nat, sitting down at the table.

"Here is Ed Lewis and a lot of Esquimaux outside, and these two fellows inside. What are we going to do with them? We can't stay cooped up in here all the time, and we have to be assured of our safety if we go abroad. We don't want to feed and lodge a lot of ungrateful dogs who will turn against us at the first opportunity. Cartwright evidently came here expecting to winter aboard this vessel, knowing her position, and knowing also that she had never moved from it since the day he abandoned his kind captain.

"Of course, he did not expect to find us here, and naturally feels disappointed. Being the first tenants, we have the first right to the place. There is room enough for all, and if he wants to stay here and behave himself, he can do so—otherwise he must leave immediately after breakfast."

"Now I want to ask you all, for your own safety, what we had better do—let him stay here on his good behavior, or oblige him to leave at once and never come back? I want to know what you all think, so as to be guided by the best judgment of the whole party, and not merely by my own feelings."

"If he promises to behave himself, and does so, let him stay; if not he must go. He came here with the Esquimaux, let him go away with them."

This was Job's opinion, and that of the others also. The party then went to bed, and slept the remainder of the night, arising as usual, but cutting their customary scanner across the ice. At breakfast, both Jones and Cartwright wereullen and silent, saying nothing to anybody, but

attending strictly to the business of satisfying their appetites.

"Now," said Nat, breakfast over, "let us come to an understanding. Do you intend to live harmoniously with us, or are we to be constantly on our guard against some new deviltry on your part? Are you going to behave yourselves like men, or like wolves?"

"I shall do just as I please," growled Cartwright.

"So will I," added Jones.

"That is sufficient. There is no room for you on board this ship. You must go at once."

"What! Turn us out to perish?" gasped Cartwright.

"You have forced the alternative upon yourselves, and there can be no appeal."

There was nothing to do but eject the villains from the ship. This was accomplished with some trouble, and at last the villains were on the way with their Esquimau friends. Several days later as our friends were seated in the cabin they were surprised by a knock on the cabin door and on opening it Ned was surprised to find standing there his old ship mates Tom Bunt and Bob Carter. Nat and the others were glad to see them and pulled them into the cabin. Then experiences were exchanged, and our friends found out that Cartwright's story about his shipmates was all a lie. Tom then said they had discovered a large field of soft coal a little way back which could be gathered from right on the surface. Ned suggested that they go and collect a lot of it for their use. The suggestion was acted upon and the next day, making a number of rude sledges, all hands except Frank set out led by Tom and Bob. Coming to the place where the coal lay exposed, all hands set to and it was not a great while before they had all they could handle of the fuel. They set out for home. When they arrived there Nat was surprised to see the cabin doors both open. Nat shouted Frank's name, but there was no response, nor could he be found anywhere in the vessel.

"Some one has been here during our absence and carried him away," said Nat.

Then Job discovered tracks outside the ship which proved to be Esquimau footprints from the size of them.

All hands now set out to rescue Frank and bring him back. After traversing several miles voices in anger were heard on ahead. There was evidently fighting of some kind going on. The little party now pushed on and presently came across some white men defending themselves against a party of Esquimaux. Nat shouted courage to the whites and he and his whole party fell on the enemy and put them to rout. When the leader of the whites and Nat saw each other Nat exclaimed:

"Mr. Cartwright! It seems we are fated to meet in the most unexpected places."

"Well, I am sure your arrival was most timely."

With Cartwright were the sailors Jones, Ned Lewis and Dick Rudd. As soon as explanations were made Nat asked Cartwright what he had done with his son Frank, and Nat told him how he had been taken from the ship while they were absent. Cartwright disclaimed any part in the abduction of Frank, and Nat told

Frank was only an adopted son, his parents having been named Trafton.

CHAPTER XIII.—More About Frank.

"Nat now said:

"You ought to know that I am perfectly aware of your treachery to my father, and your fears that I might some day learn of this are the motive of your wanting to get rid of me. By falsehoods and misrepresentations you inflamed the boy against me, though, fortunately, his own true nature was proof against your wiles."

"I don't understand."

"I do, and so does Frank. His own good heart told him that I was not the monster you would have had him believe me; that my father was innocent of the charges you brought against him, or, at least, if he was not, that it was not right to punish me for what he may have done. The log-book set him right at last, and he denounced you with all the impetuosity of his nature."

"H'm! You think a good deal of the young one."

"I do."

"Let me tell you, then, that he has kept the great secret of his life from you, and that you don't know him half as well as you think. He has been deceiving you all the time, and some day you'll find it out."

"Let us be off at once, my friends," said Nat. "These villains cannot be far ahead of us now."

"Won't you wait and stay with us?" asked Jones. "Our huts lead away down under the ice where it's warm, and we've lots of furs to sleep on and plenty to eat."

"No; we must push on."

Away over the snow and ice went the little party of rescuers, their hearts animated with the highest hopes, and their pulses beating with excitement. On and on they went through the night, the task seeming almost hopeless; but, in spite of all that, keeping up their courage and never once faltering on the way. At last, worn out by almost ceaseless travel, they were obliged to take a halt at the end of the second day after leaving Cartwright, and under the lee of an icy bluff they sank exhausted. Their food was nearly gone, and they had not found any game. The journey back would have to be made without food and in an exhausted condition, the end of which would be easily foreseen—death! The snow was now beginning to fall heavily, the wind whirling it about in great drifts, and utterly obliterating the track made by the Esquimaux.

Their case seemed utterly without hope, but Nat would not despair, and crawling close to the sheltering base, he divided his last remnant of food among his companions, and then putting the hood of his jacket over his face, he lay down and let the snow drift over him like a blanket. Chucks was the first one to awake, and after thrusting his head through the snow, he gazed with surprise at the tent over his head, and then aroused his companions. They made such a stir and bustle in getting out that they shook the drift down upon themselves and then had to be dug out once more, and there was a great deal of sport and laughter over it, until at last they all

scrambled out and took a run over the snow, which had already frozen hard, the crust being firm enough to walk on.

"What shall we do now?" asked Job.

"Push on! The Esquimaux have been delayed by the storm, and we may yet overtake them."

For several hours they continued their way over the hardened snow, Nat chatting merrily to keep up their spirits, though, Heaven knows, his own were at a low enough ebb when Chucks, who usually proved to be the discoverer of the party, yelled out:

"Look! Look! There is a whole gang of Esquimaux, and they are coming toward us!"

It needed but a second glance to convince them all the rosy fellow was right. The devoted companions in joy and sorrow, in sadness and happiness, stood close to one another, their weapons grasped firmly, while with a rush and a whirl the savage horde swept down upon them like the wind, as sudden and as swift. Nearer still they come, and now Nat sees that the sledges are full, and the men are all armed with spears, and look very ferocious. Still nearer came the sledges, and now one darts off upon one side, while a white-robed figure rises to its full height and cries out:

"Hurrah, my lads! I am glad to see you! Stop your horses my friend, or rather your dogs."

Can it be possible that figure in white is he whom they had sought so earnestly? Frank? Yes, it is no one else. It is the cabin-boy—the genial, merry Frank himself. The sledge comes to a halt at last, and Frank, leaping out, runs swiftly to Nat and hugs him—envelops him completely in the flaps of the great white coat, and laughs and cries alternately.

"God bless you, Nat! Here I am once more!" cries Frank, joyously, "and here are all of you! Did you miss me? Have you been looking for me long? Are you frightened?"

"Stop, stop, my boy!" cried Nat, with a laugh. "You ask me too many questions at once. I can't answer as fast as that."

"But you missed me?"

"Indeed we did, and would have dared anything for your sake."

"Well, here I am, and these fat fellows are going to take you and me and all of us back to the ship. I can't understand their lingo very well, but they're going to do it."

"This isn't a lark, is it, Frank?" asked Nat, gravely.

"No, indeed. I was carried away in good earnest."

"Did they not mean to bring you back?"

"Not until I—"

"Well?"

"Oh, I can't tell you now, but it was really no joke, and the dirty wretches did mean to keep me forever. They have changed their minds, though, and now we're going home—back to the ship. Jump in."

It was very evident from the actions of the Esquimaux that they intended to take Nat and his companions back to the ship, and so, without further ado, they all got into the sledges, the long whips of deerskin were snapped, the snarling little white dogs, looking like foxes and each guided by a separate rein, leaped forward, and away went the whole party, getting over the

smooth, white path with the literal speed of the wind.

It is not necessary to describe the journey back to the ship, it being enough to say that it was accomplished in a very much shorter time than could have been done without the sledges. The fires were out and the chronometer run down, but for all that they were home again, and never had the sight of the well-known figure of the frozen sentinel upon the bowsprit awakened such feelings of gratitude as it did now. Frank parted kindly with the Esquimaux, making them understand that he was very grateful to them, and that when the ice broke up in the spring, if it ever did break up; that they were all going to the Pole. Nat made the greasy fellows a few trifling presents, and then they made off, dogs, sledges and all, leaving our friends to their ice-bound home and the enjoyment of each other's society.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Rigors of Winter.

There were one or two more expeditions to the coal beds after that, Nat thinking it best to be well supplied before the extreme cold of December and January should set in. December had now set in, the day of Nat's return being the sixth of the month, and the weather already had undergone a change. The thermometer outside the cabin door frequently went as low as sixty degrees below zero, and Chucks insisted the smoke from the chimneys froze so solid some mornings that it took him longer than usual to get the breakfast. It was too cold to work outside as yet, but Nat made a work shop in the waist of the ship, and he and his companions constructed two canvas boats, light and strong, the keels, ribs, gunwales, and thwarts being of wood and the rest of canvas. This was made thoroughly waterproof by various applications of oil, there being a really quantity of stores. Christmas was approaching, and indeed by the time the boats were finished and supplied with masts, sails, and oars, it was the 24th of December, and all hands set about celebrating the day in good old-fashioned style, no matter if they were separated from all the world.

Christmas, 1869, came on a Saturday, as you will see by referring to your almanacs, and it was decided to give up both Saturday and Sunday to the celebration. So here for Christmas dinner was certainly never had, we honestly believe, and the good old St. Nicholas was doubtless as much pleased as he had ever been in his life, when he looked in upon the merrymakers that Christmas Eve and saw how finely things were progressing. The dinner designed, executed, and served in the cabin, with considerable assistance from Frank, who worked with all a woman's deftness, was an entire and unequivocal success, and from the chicken soup to the plum pudding and black coffee was done full justice to. As an addition to the feast, being an extra occasion, Chucks proposed to bring out a bottle of some particularly fine wine, which he got a bottle of a few days previous, and as no one minded off he went, little expecting what he was intended to find.

Nat and the others sat sipping their coffee

while he was gone, and in the excitement of agreeable conversation, they forgot all about Chucks and the wine, seeming to be unaware that he had gone fully half an hour, when five minutes ought to have sufficed for the commission of his errand. At last Job seemed to become conscious of his mate's absence, and looking at the clock, remarked:

"Well, I'm blowed. Chucks ain't got back yet. Wonder if he has drunk the whole bottle himself, and ain't able to get here?"

"Oh, no, Chucks isn't that sort of a boy," said Nat; "but I say, how long has he been gone?"

"Two or three hours, I reckon," answered Job, with a laugh.

"Half an hour exactly," said Frank. "Perhaps he has fallen and hurt himself. Let's go and look for him."

They all arose to carry out the boy's suggestion, when at the very moment who should appear but Chucks himself, a bottle of wine in one hand and in the other a canvas bag. This latter he now threw upon the table with a thud and a chink that set the glasses and dishes rattling.

"Open it; you're the captain, and you're the one what's got to show these fellows something, though I know what it is myself, as I couldn't help it, being on a tour of inspection."

There was a cord tied about the mouth of the bag, and this Nat unwound, and spreading aside the cloth, disclosed to the astonished eyes of all a mass of glittering gold coins.

"This is a part of the ship's treasure," he said. "Don't you remember the narrative I read spoke about its being concealed somewhere aboard? I really had forgotten all about it."

Not one of the happy family was filled with the spirit of avarice upon seeing the gold, and knowing that there was more in the ship, for Nat reasoned that the money was left in trust to him to prosecute the search for the Pole, and the others agreed that it was his, having been his father's, and that, therefore, they had no claim on it. Nat determined that if his intended expedition in the spring failed of its purpose he would return, build or charter another vessel, using this money for the purpose, and being provided with all modern appliances and conveniences devote himself thoroughly to the noble work in which his father lost his life, and carry it out until assured of success or convinced that his task was, indeed, impossible of achievement.

Not so the villainous mate and his associates. They knew well that there was treasure aboard the Adventurer, and they determined to possess it; not to carry out the same glorious purpose which animated Nat, but to enrich themselves. A thorough search was made in the morning, and the treasure was found in its entirety, though considerable work was required before it could be removed to the cabin. Captain Evan's motive in taking such a large amount of money with him—Nat estimated that there was not less than sixty thousand dollars, and perhaps more—was all that he could tell, here the money was, and it must be taken care of, to be used in the future. It was put under lock and key, Nat first putting the sum of one hundred and fifty hundred dollars in his belt, and always keep it with him.

It was upon March 10, 1870, according to Job's calendar, that, their preparations having been completed, the boats, provisions, nautical instruments, clothing, weapons, and supplies of all kinds having been put upon the sledges, for here were the Esquimaux, agreeable to their promise, ready to take them as far north as they wished to go; it was upon the tenth day of March, 1870, we repeat that Nat, locking the cabin-door upon the outside, having made the proper arrangements, gave the word to start.

CHAPTER XV.—The Boats are Launched.

Over the ice and snow, speeding like the wind across the glittering expanse, went the sledges, whips cracking, dogs barking, Esquimaux shouting, and everything and everybody in the highest spirits. The ship is left behind, the silent sentinel still on guard, as he has been all these years, the snow and ice showing no signs of releasing from their firm grasp the proud vessel which once plowed the seas like a thing of life. A hundred miles have been rolled behind the swift sledges, and ten more on top of them, and now the guides say they can smell the sea, can hear its roar, can see the drift ice, and feel a difference in the air, but Nat does not hear, feel, see or smell anything but what he has already done for the last hundred miles; there is no difference for him.

Frequent halts are made, of course, during the journey, and it was during one of these soon after Nat's research, that he asked Job to take an observation, the sun being in good condition for that operation. The sturdy harponer did so, and after figuring for a few moments, said:

"We're in north latitude 87 degrees 49 minutes, and west longitude about 69 degrees, 36 minutes, though I ain't so particular about that. It's the latitude I want."

"And the more the better," said Chucks. "The nearer you get to ninety the better."

"Perhaps we won't reach the sea on this parallel," said Nat. "Many explorers go up from the Pacific, but my father always insisted that the paper way was through Baffin's Bay, Smith's South, Kane Bay, Lincoln Sea, and so on, running as nearly as possible on the seventieth parallel of west longitude."

"That unlucky ice belt stopped him," remarked Job.

Twenty miles more traversed, and then, to Nat's unspeakable delight, there began to be signs of a general breaking-up of the ice, as though its limit had been reached, and the sea must soon appear. Deep fissures were met with at the bottom of which, far below, could be heard the rush of waters, and at least these grew more frequent and were not so deep; then channels were found between the floes in which the water was quite deep and not unpleasantly cold. The streams running through the ice grew wider and wider and more numerous, and at last Nat proposed, as a measure of safety for the Esquimaux, that he and his companions launch their boats, and leave the natives to make their way to the mainland, which he was sure existed. The preparations for the launch were at once begun, Nat explaining to the Esquimaux that they were to

wait for him and his comrades if expedient. Eight hours after the launching of the boats Nat sat in the stern sheets of the forward craft, steering, while Frank, wrapped in his greatcoat, was fast asleep, Job seeming ready to follow his example. The other boat was not far behind, Tom steering and Chucks pulling occasionally, more for the sake of keeping awake than of doing any particular good by rowing. When Frank and Job awoke, they were surprised to find the boats in an open sea. The boats made a good five knots, the breeze being just right for craft of their size to send along in, and Nat's heart fairly danced as he thought of the glorious victory almost achieved, the prize almost won, the battle nearly finished. Job took an observation upon the second day of their embarking fairly on the Polar Sea, and both he and Nat made their position out as in north latitude 88 degrees and 30 minutes, or within one-and-one-half degrees of the Pole itself. Soon after the record had been made, Chucks, who had all along until recently been noted as a discoverer, suddenly startled everybody by jumping up, putting his telescope to his eye, and, after a pause, shouting out:

"Land, ho!"

The others gazed intently toward the point indicated, and Job, taking the glass, said with an air of conviction:

"He's right; there is land, and plenty of it."

A little cove was sighted and the boat was put into this and run ashore where the American flag was hoisted on a pole. Suddenly Frank exclaimed:

"Look there! There are other discoverers here beside ourselves!"

Nat looked and then muttered:

"It is Cartwright and his crew. But we were here first."

Cartwright and his party had come in three boats. Nat and his party went inland for a distance and half an hour later returned to the boats, to discover that the one containing their provisions, nautical instruments, etc., had been stove in by somebody and just as they reached it, it sunk to the bottom.

"May the will of God be done," murmured Nat as he buried his face in his hands.

CHAPTER XVI.—The Punishment of Treachery.

Nat succeeded in composing himself after a while, and then said calmly:

"What has happened cannot be helped now, so let us not complain. It is nearly noon, and I think we had better go to yonder light and take an observation. The ascertaining of our true position is now the one thing of importance."

Leaving Tom to guard the other boat and give an alarm in case any attempt was made to destroy it, Nat proceeded in the direction of the light he had pointed out, followed by his comrades. The distance was greater than he supposed, and when they halted upon the crest of a pile of black rocks, from which an almost uninterrupted view of the sea and his newly found continent could be obtained, they were pretty well tired out. They sat down and rested for some time, chatting gayly the while, and never

alluding to the dark side of the picture. At last Nat arose and called to Job to bring him the quadrant as he was ready to take an observation and determine their true position. After adjusting the instrument and fixing the different sights in their proper position, Nat held it firmly to his eye and began his work. When he had marked upon the dial at his side the correct figures, he began to work out the problem, saying excitedly:

"By jove! if this isn't the North Pole itself, then I'm out. Let me see," and he rapidly worked the sum out in his head, crying at last:

"Yes, sir, it's just nine—"

A strange sound broke the stillness of that desolate place. The sound was the report of a pistol. The bullet struck the instrument and knocked it, shattered, from Nat's hands, whence, falling down the jagged rocks, it was literally broken to pieces.

Cartwright was seen dashing down the slope, followed by Jones, Lewis, and the rest, and Nat at once gave chase. Chucks threw up his big gun to his shoulder, having previously put in a bomb, and a thundering report followed. The swift messenger of death flew straight to its mark, and had not the treacherous mate slipped as he ran, and fallen to the ground, the missile would have caused his death. It passed over his head, however, and striking a rock, exploded, injuring Lewis seriously, and hurting the others somewhat, the flying particles striking them in their faces. Bob Carter was just ahead of Chucks when he discharged the gun, and seeing that the shots had failed, seized the weapon and loaded it with the last bomb that the jolly oarsman possessed. Then he strode rapidly forward, moving in an oblique angle to the direction taken by Nat and his companions.

Cartwright had himself left his party, and they were about to scatter when Job came up with Jones and struck him to the earth with his fist.

"Who cut our boat?" demanded Job of Jones.

"I don't know."

"You lie!" said the harpooner, seizing him by the throat and shaking him. "You did it yourself. Tell that!"

A stunning kick sent the man flying down the rocks in a most undignified heap, while a yell, as he reached the bottom, gave evidence of his living power. Suddenly a tremendous report was heard, and then a cry of agony so terrible that everyone was forced from very fear to hold his breath. Nat and Job sprang forward, and as they reached the rocks around which Bob had disappeared, they saw a terrible sight. The body of Carter had nearly torn to pieces, lay upon the rocks, and close at hand Bob Carter was engaged in a fierce struggle with Dick Rull and the Harpooner. Dick Rull had at that moment succeeded in breaking down Bob's gun, and was now, half-clad with him, the gleam of his scimitar being momentarily seen. They were near the edge of a precipice, and before Nat could come to the assistance of the sailor, both he and his enemy leaped headlong down the awful abyss, still clasped each other with a deathly grasp. A wild groan rose upon the startled air as they left the edge of the precipice, and Nat's heart

stood still at the sound. He had heard more than that fearful cry, for blended with it had come an appeal for help in the well-known tones of Frank Trafton. Nat turned and saw the lad struggling fiercely with the traitor Lewis, his slight frame being no match for the stalwart shipkeeper. Nat saw the lad fall upon the sharp rocks, and then beheld Lewis detach a heavy mass from the rough boulders near him, and raise it threateningly over Frank's head. Though the distance was considerable, Nat cleared it in an incredibly short space of time, and dealt the monster a ringing blow upon the head just as he was about to throw the heavy mass upon the unconscious boy at his feet.

"Coward!" cried Nat, enraged, "leave this place at once, or I will not answer for your safety!"

The stone fell from the man's hands, but not upon Frank, and Lewis, stunned and dazed by the blow, staggered from the spot as if drunk.

"Get out of here, you miserable cur!" cried Nat, and with another kick he sent the scoundrel reeling down the steep path.

Then he turned to Frank, the boy's pale face and bated breath giving him the greatest alarm. With frenzied excitement he loosened the lad's coat in order to expose his throat and allow a chance for the blood to circulate. As he pulled open the boy's inner jacket and unloosed the collar of his shirt he suddenly uttered a cry of surprise. The boy Frank was no boy at all, but a woman! At that instant Frank opened his eyes, and, seeing Nat, blushed like a rose.

"Fear not, Frank," said Nat, hastily, "your secret is safe."

"You have saved my life," said the other, turning to Nat and taking his hand. "You will still call me Frank?"

"Yes."

"And not ask for my story yet?"

"Not until you wish it."

"When he I called father is no more, I will tell you all, and reveal another secret which I have tried, and almost is vain, to conceal."

"The man is already beyond our reach."

"Dead?"

"Yes." Then turning to the others:

"Let us haste away from this place," said Nat, "for my mind is not at ease, and I know not what may happen. We can have no nautical instruments but on compass, and only one frail craft to bear us four away."

"But the Pole?" said Job, gravely.

So they once more went aboard the boats and sailed away.

"The Pole is there," said the young hero, "and I am confident that I have found it, but, alas! I have no proof to the world that I have accomplished his hitherto impossible feat, I should only receive the world's derision for my trouble. Farewell, bright dream; in the future you may return, but now, farewell."

Through storm and tempest, sunshine and calm the wanderers were wasted over the ocean, till, one day, when their provisions and water had given out for many hours, their clothes all soiled, their boat badly leaking and threatening to sink, they lay wait for land, the ever joyful Chucks espied a sail. A Norwegian whaler was out in his boats chasing whales, and the returned explorers were soon taken aboard the Bjorn and carried for with all the tenderness that

sailors know how to show to distressed mariners.

Nat and Frank stood upon the deck of an American vessel, returning home to the beloved land they had not seen in some whole year and more, and which at one time they thought they would never behold again. Job and Chucks are upon the same vessel, but they are forward among the sailors at the present moment, Chucks telling yards and Job gravely listening. Thanks to Frank's foresight in having them all provide themselves with money before leaving the Adventurer for the last time, they were by no means penniless when they at last set foot once more upon shore, the Bjorn returning at the end of September. Nat found an American vessel about to sail for Boston, and finding the captain, he told his story, and offered to pay for his passage home. This the honest-hearted tar would not consent to, and Nat and Frank were once more installed in the cabin, the captain taking to them at once, and being intensely interested in the recital of their adventures.

"Nat," says Frank, this beautiful evening, "I promised once to tell you several things which seemed inexplicable to you."

"Yes, my dear, you did; but you need be in no hurry about."

"First about the Esquimaux bringing me back after they had carried me away."

"That did puzzle me, I must own, for these fellows are not in the habit of doing things in that way."

"The secret is just this: When they discovered that I was a woman, for I soon made them understand it, they ceased their cruel treatment of me, and behaved as if I were a goddess."

"They could not do enough to please me, for they said that there had been a white woman once who had been good to them, and they could not forget her. For her sake they swore to do everything in their power to make me happy, and they treated me with unusual kindness; though they do have queer ways of showing it."

Here Frank laughed such a soft and silvery laugh that Nat was forced to join in; it was infectious. He remembered the awkward ways of certain goodnatured Inuits he had seen, and he was obliged to laugh at the remembrance.

"I had a fancy that this white woman was Lady Franklin," resumed Frank; "though, of course, I had no means of ascertaining. When I told them that I wanted to be taken back to the ship they consented, and that's how I came back. I could not tell you then, for I had my secret to keep."

"Cartwright must have been as careful as you, for he never gave me the slightest inkling of the case."

"Do you know why? For years I have been a
host to all the world. The relatives of the children,
I will say nothing more. But I have had
them here for six years ago."

I do not know of the extent of the man's
wickedness, nor the depth of his deceit, and in
my anguish and fear of him I promised to do
whatever he wished, believing you to be a mon-
ster, undeserving of pity. Love for you con-
tinues, though I have not seen you at all; I

came to regard him with horror. He would not hesitate to take life if he could advance his interests thereby, and I knew that he and Jones had a plan to either kill or abandon the captain, and seize the vessel.

"You were to be sacrificed at the same time, and then we were to return and live in ease. I so hated the wretch that I avoided him as much as possible, and when I got into your boat upon the last day of our stay on the Arctic Fox, it was so I might not be with him. I knew when Tom told us of the abandonment that he and Jones had had it planned beforehand, for I saw them whispering together just before we lowered, but did not think much of it at the time. You could not know then how thankful I was that I had been with you in the boat, although our lives were in such peril, for I loved you with all my heart, and yet could not tell it. I feared that you would think me bold and reproach me for being the child of that man, but little by little I knew that you were too noble for that. And yet I was obliged to keep my secret.

"While you believed that I was a lad, I could be near you at all times, assist you with what strength I had, and be a beloved companion to you. Once you knew me to be what I was, I feared that you would be embarrassed—would think me a burden; perhaps not love me as you loved the 'dear little Frank,' and I still kept my secret."

"You know now that you were mistaken, don't you?"

For answer she turns her face to his and gives him a look full of tenderness and devotion, such as any man might feel proud to have bestowed upon him.

The story of North Pole Nat is finished, and but a few lines remain to be written. Whether the silent sentinel of the Adventurer still keeps his ceaseless vigil no one knows, and very likely no one will ever know, for Nat has given up his ambition of finding the northern limit of this, our globe. Established in a good business, with a loving wife and a group of merry children to make home pleasant, he cares no more to roam over the world, but remains just where he settled after his return, in busy New York.

Job is a harpooner still, and will be until he dies, but he has had all of the Arctic Ocean he wants, and always ships upon vessels bound for the Pacific or Indian Oceans. Mr. and Mrs. Chucks are as happy as two such jolly souls can be expected, the partner of the rosy fellow's joys being as merry as himself. Chucks is getting too rotund to go as a sailor now, and he has settled down as a ship chandler, at which business he makes a tidy little income, which he says is for his only son, a fine, manly fellow withal, though somewhat inclined to obesity, whom he has named Nathan Frank Chucks—Nat's wife is still called Frank, and nothing else—after his oldtime messmate and constant friend, North Pole Nat.

Next week's issue will contain "THIRTEEN
WHITE RAVENS; or, THE GHOSTLY RIDERS
OF THE FOREST."

PLUCK AND LUCK

CURRENT NEWS

21

A PLAGUE OF GRASSHOPPERS

France has had a grasshopper pest of unparalleled severity. They have not only destroyed crops but, according to cable dispatches, they have interfered with train service as well. The insects appeared in such numbers that they blocked train service between Niort and Fontenay-Le-Comte, a distance of over thirty miles. So thickly were they massed in this region that it was necessary to stop trains frequently to clear the tracks. The train crews were supplied with special implements for this purpose.

29 SNOWBOUND AUTOISTS

After having been snowbound for five days, with nothing but potatoes and beans to keep them from starving, twenty-nine persons, including seven women and six children, were brought to Cheyenne, Wyo., from a ranch home eighteen miles north of the city.

The autoists, mostly residents of Southern Wyoming and Colorado, who left Wheatland for the South in twelve automobiles, were caught by a

blizzard. They managed to reach the nearest house, where they were marooned until a rescue party, using a ten-ton army tractor, succeeded in plowing through the snow and rescued them.

POISONING OF THAMES GULLS STIRS LONDON

Proof that the average Londoner is ardently fond of birds was furnished when the report of the death of several scores of Thames gulls was given prominent space in the newspapers and called forth general indignation.

An old custom is feeding the gulls along the Thames embankment, where hundreds of persons daily stand, throwing bread crumbs into the air and watching the birds catch the morsels on the wing.

The other day the bodies of a number of gulls were found floating in the river. An investigation disclosed that some person, instead of throwing bread crumbs to the birds, had fed them matches, the phosphorous ends of which poisoned and killed them.

LOOK! LOOK!

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The Vanishing Of Val Vane

-- O --

THE TROUBLES OF A BOY MILLIONAIRE

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VII.

Val Has Another Escape.

Ellen played and sang for an hour, and gradually harmony was restored.

At half-past ten a little lunch was served, and at eleven Val and Jack retired to their room.

"This state of affairs is something fearful!" Val exclaimed. "Before I started I was strong on finding out what the rights and wrongs of the situation were. Now I don't care a thing about it. To be under the rule of that man is enough to drive any one to desperate deeds. I shall take him at his word. Ralph Dubey goes out flying."

"Hush! Hush! Not so loud! Why, you are fairly yelling," cautioned Jack. "There may be spies under our window at this very moment for all we can tell."

He looked out and could see no one.

"Let's turn in," he said. "The sooner we are asleep the better."

They did so and were soon asleep.

The night passed peacefully except that the boys were several times awakened by firing, and once the shots sounded so near that Val thought they must have been fired in the garden.

At seven o'clock Val got up and rang a bell, which was operated by an old-fashioned cord.

This brought Uncle Ike to the door, and Val asked for two extra towels, saying that he and his friend wanted to take a bath.

"Suttely, sah," replied Ike, "but I se sorry to form you dat de bathroom's busted. De water doan run in de tub no mo' fo' some reason or nudder. Wha' de mattah wiv yo' gwine over to de lake an' havin' a swim?"

"The very thing," replied Val. "Where is this lake?"

"On'y lilly way. I show yer."

The lake proved to be in a deep hollow of the same tableland on which the house stood and not a quarter of a mile away.

It was long and narrow. On one side rose a high, rocky cliff to a height of nearly a thousand feet. Thick woods skirted the other side. There were many big boulders strewn about and were partially submerged.

The boys stripped, and, diving from one of these rocks, had a delightful swim.

"What a paradise could be made of this place!" Val cried as they were drying. "It's going to be mine. I've been thinking it all over. I'm going to take right hold here. I shouldn't wonder

if it ended up in me becoming my own superintendent."

"If you only understood coal mining," replied Jack.

"Easily learned. I'm going right at it."

They were talking further in this vein and were almost dressed when Jack suddenly ducked, and catching Val by the suspenders, dragged the boy down after him.

At the same instant a shot rang out and its echo was thrown back by the cliff.

"For heaven's sake!" gasped Val. "Who fired?"

"I saw him," replied Jack. "He came out from behind a tree and was taking deliberate aim at us. Let's dust out!"

"I won't. I want to see him. If he is a detective—"

"Don't think it. He was in his shirt sleeves and wore trousers which looked as if they were made out of old bags. Confound it, Val, if you will get up and take a chance then I'm with you! There he is. See!"

Just around the bend of the lake, standing by a tree, was a tall, gaunt man with scrawny chin whiskers. He was dressed as Jack said and wore on his head an old battered straw hat. In his hands he held an old-fashioned double-barreled gun.

"Hey, there!" shouted Val. "What do you mean by firing at us, neighbor? We never did you any harm."

For an instant the man glared at them and then in silence vanished among the trees.

"So that's what we have to expect," said Jack. "Certainly we want to keep our eyes peeled."

"But why should he fire at us?" questioned Val.

"We are strangers—stopping at the homestead. He is a mountaineer, of course. Rather poor stock to work on, Val."

"He certainly looks it. Come, let us go. I wouldn't say anything about this to Ellen, if I were you."

"I disagree with you," declared Jack. "That girl has done all she could for us. She has a right to know."

Val shrugged his shoulders and told him to suit himself. They returned to the house and at eight o'clock Ellen joined them on the piazza.

"Breakfast is all ready," she said, after morning greetings had been exchanged. "Did you rest well?"

"We were awakened two or three times by the shots," replied Val.

"I heard them. I scarcely slept at all. To tell the truth, boys, I am terribly worried about you. Much as I enjoy your society, I wish you were safely back in New York."

"Now that's kind of you," laughed Val. "I'm not a bit afraid."

"And you?" asked Ellen, looking at Jack.

"I am almost inclined to agree with you," replied Jack, gravely. "We have had one adventure already. George did not want me to mention it; all the same I am going to."

Ellen turned pale.

"For pity says! Not those horrible detectives again?" she cried, and then Jack told her of the happening at the lake.

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

RECORD FOSSIL FOUND

Discovery of the thigh bones of a Patagonian dinosaur, each bone measuring 2 metres, 70 centimetres (nearly nine feet) in length, and claimed to be the largest unearthed in any part of the world, was announced by La Plata Museum, Buenos Ayres.

The skeleton of the great diplodocus assembled at the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburg has thigh bones only 1 metre, 50 centimetres long, although the entire skeleton measures 25 metres, and from these figures it is conjectured that when the Patagonian dinosaur roamed the Mesozoic forests he was at least 45 metres, or about 140 feet long.

THE CONQUEST OF KILIMANJÀRO

Kilimanjaro, Africa's two-headed giant, has again been climbed, this time by two Englishmen, Gillman and Nason. Mount Kibo, the higher of the two heads by some 2,000 feet, was selected for the adventure. The slopes covered by loose shingle, afforded but a slippery foothold; above this zone, progress could only be made by chopping steps in the ice. Persevering with superhuman efforts, the rim of the ice-filled crater was finally reached; here were found, in a good state of preservation, the cards of German climbers who had forestalled the Englishmen. At about 19,500 feet the pulse was 120 to 130, and breathing was 35 to the minute. Boiling-point observations were

EDWARD I OR 3 DETECTIVES

Prosector John L. Coughlin, head of the Protective Division, New York, recently summoned Protective Sergeants Edward A. Kiley, John L. O'Gorman and Frederick Flanagan to his office and told them he had a check for \$1,000 as a reward from the Post Office Department for their part in the capture of three robbers who, on Oct. 24, 1921, pulled up a mail truck in Lincoln Street, Brooklyn, and robbed with more than \$2,000,000 in money, jewelry and securities. Each of the criminals was sentenced to thirty-five years in prison in the Federal Court several weeks ago.

Under the rules of the Police Department each
officer was permitted to receive only \$750 of
the total, 15 per cent. of the \$3,000 going to the
Police Relief Fund and the remaining 10 per cent.
to the Hospital Fund.

CHINESE POSTMAN CARRIES MAIL IN A TUB

It's all so new, I am back to the Cloud City (1120 L.E. B.C.) where I only had to start from scratch. I found the motivation to continue, though. Thanks to a certain step mom in Alaska, I am now officially a member of the indie rock scene. I am very excited about my first

maintained for a time between the capital and Tsinaufu, in Shantung.

Away off in Chinese Turkestan four-wheel wagons drawn by ponies carry the mails, while in Shensi mule litters and bullock carts serve the purpose. In Manchuria horse-drawn sledges skim over the ice and on the Kalgan-Urga route slow-trudging camel trains constitute the mail transport. There are certain places on the Yangtse where the mail-man pulls himself by hand along a cable stretched from one side of a gorge to the other with the mail sacks strapped to his back. Across the Yellow River in Shensi a square raft made of water-buffalo skins carries the courier.

In modernized China fast steam trains and motortrucks have superseded the ancient methods. The annual report of the post-office for 1921 shows that from 1905 to 1920 the bulk of mailed matter has increased from 3,000,000 pieces to 400,000,000, and the area covered from 20,000 li to 475,000 li. During 1921 there were 442,116,358 pieces of mail matter handled, averaging slightly more than one piece to every inhabitant.

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A Strange Case

By COL. RALPH FENTON.

I was on a mission at Chillington, and my headquarters were at Melcham Court during the time. I was not sure of being a welcome guest, but for this I did not care, since it was the public I sought to serve and not a single individual.

Joab Melcham was reputed wealthy. He was master of Melcham Court, and lived in a style becoming the blue-blooded aristocracy from which he sprang. He was also president of Chillington Bank, and a stockholder in various other enterprises of importance. Among the common people he was not liked. He chilled and repulsed them with his frown, and people will not overlook such things.

At the time of which I am writing Andrew Mayne was cashier of the bank at Chillington, and he was in difficulty. It was a difficulty that promised to land the cashier in state prison for a term of years. It was his wife's tears and earnest protestations of her husband's innocence that induced me to look into the matter at all. Perhaps the reader will wonder why, since I am a detective, and at home in cases of crime in its every phase.

The reason was simply this: Andrew Mayne was in jail, charged with appropriating money not his own to the amount of forty thousand dollars, and he admitted his guilt with the coolest indifference, seemingly, as to his fate.

And yet his wife positively assured me that Andrew was innocent.

I of course received her assurance with a large degree of allowance.

"Your husband, madam, must be a queer man to confess guilt if he is really innocent. I have read of cases of this kind, but have always considered them myths. In my own experience I never met with such a case. I cannot see how Andrew Mayne can remain long outside of prison. If he is the man he admits himself to be, the state prison is the place for him!"

I fixed a cold glance on the wife's face while I talked. It was possible, I thought, that she knew her husband was guilty, but hoped in some way to save him from merited doom.

There was fear in the pale face and pleading eyes, however, that assured me that whatever Andrew Mayne was, his wife was an honest, earnest woman and devoted wife, and really a believer in the innocence of her unfortunate husband.

"How do you explain your husband's confession?" said I at length. "I cannot reconcile it with a theory of innocence."

"I know, sir, how strange it seems; but Andrew never took the money. There's a conspiracy somewhere to ruin Andrew."

"And he lends himself to it—for his own destruction?" I retorted, with a sharp look.

"It's a secret, sir. You can't expect me to ferret out the riddler, sir."

There was a quiver in the woman's voice as she put the question.

"I will see your husband, and if there is any chance for work, you may depend upon it I will not shrink from the task."

With this assurance I left the Mayne cottage and repaired to the city jail. I found Andrew Mayne in anything but a pleasant mood. His haggard face and sunken eyes did not serve to prepossess me in favor of his innocence. His whole demeanor was that of a man laboring under some great mental trouble.

"I am guilty. The sooner the farce is over the better."

This was his answer to my inquiries.

"Why did you take the money? You had a living salary, with none but a wife to support beside yourself."

"Don't ask me. I plead guilty; I can say no more."

With those words ringing in my ears I left the jail.

Surely there was no chance for a case here. I had best return home at once and let the law take its course. When I uttered these words mentally, the pale, tear-wet face of Mollie Mayne came suddenly to haunt me, and to shake my faith in things visible both to the eye and ear.

After pacing up and down for a time I concluded that I would look into the matter a little further, and if I could find the least excuse for remaining on the case, I would do so. Court would not convene for four weeks, and this would give me ample time to investigate.

My next move was to interview the president of the bank, Joab Melcham. Since Mr. Melcham was one of those most interested in the defalcation, and, as I was, as a detective, no respecter of persons, I did not make the visit in the shape of an officer of justice. I wished to make the acquaintance of the wealthy owner of Melcham Count without reserve. As a detective I would be received graciously as a matter of course.

I learned that Melcham Court was minus a butler, the man who had filled the position for many years having departed this life very suddenly but a few weeks before the opening of this narrative. It was for the vacant place I applied. I had recommendations without number. I was always careful to supply myself with such necessities when needed, and they come in good stead just now.

While the banker read my credentials, I mentally reviewed him.

He was rather a handsome man, with silky beard and bright blue eyes, and not far from forty. His every movement was quick and energetic, showing great nervous force.

I was made up for the occasion, with mutton-chops and the dress of one who had seen better day. In fact, I represented myself as a down English gentleman, who had sought America for the opportunity of regaining a portion of my lost fortune, etc. I will not tire the reader with repeating my story here.

Joab Melcham cast a keen glance into my face, over my person, and then said:

"You will do."

That was sufficient, and I was installed as butler at Melcham Court.

It was an English house, and its master was English. I learned the weak side of the banker's nature—love for all things English—and at once ingratiated myself. Soon gentleman and butler were an extremely friendly family. Melcham had no family, save a family of servants. He

was a widower, and I did not wonder that I often found him indulging a fit of blues.

What was I to gain by all this?

One morning something occurred that set me to thinking deeply. I always delivered the banker's mail, morning and evening, usually to him in the library. On the morning in question, however, Melcham was late in rising, and I, having received several letters from the postman, went to the banker's chamber. The hour was late. The chamber door was lightly ajar, and as I had on cloth slippers, my feet made little noise. I came to a halt at the door, held for a moment by a strange sound from within—a deep goan, that seemed to come from the heart of one in terrible mental agony.

"Heavens! if this is true, and Andrew Mayne hears of it I am ruined. He must never know it—never!"

In husky accents came the words to my ears, and I knew they fell from the lips of Joab Melcham.

I waited a moment at the door, when, hearing a servant in the hall approaching it, I at once pushed open the chamber door and advanced into the room.

"Ah, it is you, John? Mail? Oh, yes, I am glad you brought it. I will be down soon."

He took the letter from the salver and I noticed that his hand trembled as he did it. I was fully convinced that Joab Melcham was laboring under some terrible excitement. He possessed great powers of self-control, however, and rapidly became calm.

It was after twelve when the banker came down. Partaking of a hasty lunch, he left the house and walked briskly toward the bank. Nothing but a slight paleness indicated the recent excitement that had possessed him.

After he was gone I again visited his room. I found nothing of the *Morning Chronicle*, yet I knew the paper had been taken in his room that morning. Evidently the banker had taken the paper with him; in this there was nothing strange, however. It was an easy matter to secure another from a passing newsboy, and I was soon examining its contents with lynx eyes.

I'd discover nothing that could in any possibly way concern the banker much excitement. I was on the point of laying down the paper, when my eye caught a familiar name. It was under the head of "Obituary." "Charles J. Mayne, a highly-respected citizen, died very suddenly at his _____, Montreal. Heart disease is supposed to be the cause. Mr. Mayne was nearly seventy, and a citizen of worth. He has relatives in the States."

That very day I sought an interview with Mrs. Mayne, the prisoner's young wife. I showed her the obituary notice and questioned her regarding

"Charles J. Mayne was my husband's father," she said. "They have not met for years. I think he will feel even worse than he does now when he learns the truth. Would it not be best to keep it from him for the present?"

"I don't see."

When I showed the obituary notice to Andrew Mayne, he came near falling under the blow.

"It is true, at last," he said, in a voice husky with emotion. "Does Mr. Melcham know of this?"

"I am not able to state," was my evasive reply. "Would it affect him in any way if he did?"

"I wish to send a written word to the banker. Can I trust you to take it, Mr. Sharp?"

This was his answer to my question. He was deeply excited, and trembled not a little. I tried to get the fellow to confide in me what he wished to say to the banker, his late employer, but he persistently refused. At length I consented to be the bearer of a sealed letter to Joab Melcham. Paper and envelope were obtained of the jailer, and Andrew was permitted to write a note to the banker.

Joab Melcham came in late that night. I placed Andrew Mayne's letter in his hand and stood back respectfully while he perused it. I watched him narrowly, and saw that his face paled, and that he looked deeply annoyed.

"I am going to Boston," he said, addressing me. "I shall drive out a few miles to see a man, and take a train there. You will explain to all who may call."

Soon after Mr. Melcham vanished, and his carriage wheels rattled away.

I was determined on a bold move, and made it.

When Joab Melcham stepped upon the platform of the little way station, I was not far behind him. He did not buy a ticket—he was too cunning for that. In ten minutes the train would be due.

"Mr. Melcham?"

The fleeing banker turned and faced me quickly. He looked into the muzzle of a revolver.

"Not Canada, but a prison, my friend," I said coolly. At the same time I produced a pair of steel bracelets.

"The young fiend has peached!"

But he submitted, nevertheless. I knew then I had made no mistake. My man was near by with a light wagon, and Melcham went back to Chillington, instead of proceeding across the border.

On the following day Chillington was astonished at the intelligence that the banker, Melcham, was under arrest for embezzlement. The case was plain enough after that.

Andrew Mayne had made no statement, but I knew that he had warned the banker of what he might expect, and it was not the young cashier's fault that Melcham had not escaped.

On learning of the bank president's arrest, Mayne did make a statement, which was afterward proved in court.

The cashier had taken upon himself the crime of which he knew Melcham was guilty, in order to shield his old father, who, some years before, would have gone to prison for the misappropriation of a few thousands, had not Melcham, then a young man, fled from the place in order not to testify against one who had befriended him. When Andrew Mayne caught Melcham in the act of robbing the bank of which he was himself president, Melcham pleaded for mercy, and reminded him of the elder Mayne's case, which the banker said was not too old to be resurrected. To save his father, Andrew Mayne consented to shoulder his employer's villainy.

Andrew Mayne was set free. Melcham confessed his guilt and threw himself on the mercy of the court. He got ten years in the penitentiary, nevertheless.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JANUARY 17, 1923

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

PAYS HER 4-CENT INCOME TAX ONE CENT EACH QUARTER

John T. Rafferty, collector of internal revenue for Brooklyn, told recently of a woman whose total tax for the year was 4 cents, and who paid 1 cent every three months. He added that the postage used in notifying her of the amounts due was far in excess of the tax.

THE KILLING OF LOBO, THE WOLF

For three long years Lobo fattened on the cattle of the Arizona plains; from one ranch alone, in one year, he seized 50 fine white-faced yearlings. A government hunter, in an automobile, has at last brought Lobo down with a single shot from a rifle with the rear sight missing. The wolf weighed 78 pounds after the skin from shoulders to head was removed, and was the largest ever seen on the range; his disposal means a saving of several thousand dollars in stock annually.

BOYS FIGHT POLICE AND FILL COAL SACKS

A band of boys, 12 and 14 years old, the other day, obtained coal at Yonkers, N. Y., of obtaining coal. Shortly after daylight the boys, carrying sacks, descended en masse on the coal yard of William S. Harrigan Company in River street, Yonkers. When the surprised watchman tried to run them away the boys chased him back into the building, attacking him with chunks of coal.

The watchman telephoned police, and when a cordon of patrolmen arrived the boys split into two groups. One group held off the police by throwing coal while the other members of the band continued to fill their sacks. When the filling was completed they gave a signal to their companions and all fled. None of the boys was caught.

FACTORY EMPLOYEES ATTEND OWN NIGHT SCHOOL

The average man desires to better his condition and is willing to go to quite a bit of trouble

to do so is indicated by the success that has attended the inauguration of night school classes among the tire builders at a big factory in Akron, Ohio.

Several hundred men have enrolled in the classes. Many of these are men in mechanical departments, who are interested in such subjects as arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, mechanics, physics, blue print reading, mechanical drawing and the like.

However, general classes covering such subjects as organization and management, business law, finance, and economics have also proved widely popular.

"Married men seem to stick better than single ones," says H. K. Carpenter, in charge. "Less than 10 per cent. of those who enrolled two months ago have dropped out, and all of these were single men. Ninety per cent. of the men taking the school work are married, and are men who are working to better themselves."

LAUGHS

"Ma has solved the servant girl problem." "That so? How?" "She's decided to do the work herself."

He (nervously)—Margaret, there's been something trembling on my lips for months and months. She—Yes, so I see; why don't you shave it off?

Commercial—If a man has an income of two millions a year, what is his principal? Cynic—A man with such an income usually has not principal.

"It is always well to humor women," says Noah Coontz, of Chippewa. "I let my wife think she knows more about running a furnace than I do, and as a result I haven't been in my own cellar in five years."

"How old is your little brother?" inquired Willie. "He's a year old," replied Tommy. "Huh! I've got a dog a year old, and he can walk twice as well as your brother." "That's nothing. Your dog's got twice as many legs."

First Tramp—Strange how many awful dreams come true. Second Tramp—Oh, I don't know. I remember how I once yearned to wear long trousers. Now, I guess I wear them longer than almost anybody in the country.

"Son, why don't you play circus? It's great fun. First you make a sawdust ring." "Where'll I get any sawdust, dad?" "Here's the saw. Just saw some of that cordwood into stove lengths. You can have all the sawdust you make."

"My father and I know everything in the world," boasted a small boy to his boon companions. "All right," answered the latter. "Where's Asia?" Then the first speaker proved himself a true building diplomat. "That is one of the questions that my father knows."

PLUCK AND LUCK GOOD READING

27

MINE 4½ TONS OF GOLD

Four and one-half tons of gold were obtained by the Soviet Government from its gold mines during the twelve months ended Oct. 31.

The Lena gold fields alone yielded more than three and a half tons, while the remainder was obtained from seven other gold fields. The number of workmen engaged in these fields, according to the Supreme Economic Council, is 11,789.

BABY TOSSED IN MAIL SACK

Amid the hustle and bustle of a large crowd of Christmas shoppers in the main post-office in Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 22, came the cries of a mother for her lost infant.

While the mother was addressing Christmas packages at a table in the lobby she placed the child in a market basket, which she placed under the table. Her packages ready to be mailed, she looked for the baby. It had disappeared.

The basket, with its contents, had been picked up by a post-office employee and thrown into a mail sack. Cries from the child as the sack was about to be placed on a mail truck led to its dis-

The woman refused to divulge her identity.

ANCIENT FOREST UNDER WASHINGTON, D. C.

Evidence of the existence of an ancient swamp in the neighborhood of the present-day living part of Washington, D. C., has been discovered in a deep excavation made for the foundation of a hotel under construction in Washington, D. C., says *Science*. At a depth of about twenty-five feet below the street level the excavation disclosed a layer of black swamp mud, containing large quantities of wood, tree trunks and stumps. Some of the stumps are of great size, a few of them reaching a diameter of [redacted]. Much of the wood is well preserved, showing clearly the woody structure and the external markings of the bark. A preliminary examination indicates that one of the more common trees of this ancient swamp was cypress.

The story of these trees, however, is only a brief chapter of the whole geologic history shown in the soil of the city. Just ten years ago, in 1902, the author of this article, for the United States Geological Survey, took the part of the expedition to the Philippines from the time of the Spanish conquest, into which it was necessary to go to study the geological and mineral conditions of the country. He found that over the entire area he had been geologically covered in the Philippines, except its very southern and southernmost parts, which have been carried away by the great typhoon. The larger forests are still in the same state in which they grew before the arrival of the smaller populations, and the part of the Philippines in beyond the Blue Ridge, and of the central valley of China in the granite of the Philippines.

On a thin layer of plant debris and earth in this old swamp the day-old people were laid down by streams of water during the glacial epoch,

when the northern part of North America, as far south as Northern Pennsylvania, was covered with immense sheets of thick ice, showing that the trees lived in the latter part of the Great Ice Age, which is variously estimated to have ended from 20,000 to 30,000 years ago.

WHAT CAUSED THE CHILEAN QUAKE?

How Chili's death-dealing earthquake, which shattered cities and engulfed their helpless inhabitants with tremendous tidal waves, originated at sea off the coast of that country, is explained by Dr. J. Humphreys' meteorological physicist of the United States Weather Bureau, from the seismographic records made by the earth's tremors at this point. His report is given out by Science Service. For four hours the pen of the highly sensitive instrument drew the picture of the movements in the earth, which wrought such havoc among the Chilean towns in a few minutes.

Earthquakes, Dr. Humphreys said, are produced by a slipping or breaking of the crust of the earth as a result of strains. These strains may be caused by the shrinking of the interior of the earth through temperature changes, changes in loads due to rapid erosion taking material from one place to another in the course of a few hundred years, or from the tendency of higher land to flow out to sea.

From what is known of the Chilean quake, it seems to have been caused by higher land coming out to sea. The actual break in the crust occurred at some distance from shore, and this sudden change in the ocean floor at that point produced a tidal wave. As there were several such waves, there must have been several faults or breaks in the earth's crust at the sea bottom which created the different huge billows in the incompressible water. It is probable that this crack extended for a hundred miles or more and that the wave created was detected in the Philippines or other distant Pacific points.

Breaks, such as caused the shocks and waves in Chili, have left their mark on the physical geography of our own country. For instance, there is a break in the earth's crust which can be seen at Great Falls, Va., near Washington. It has been traced from near Boston, through New York to the James River in Virginia. The Hudson River Valley was created by a similar slipping in the earth's crust.

An earthquake may occur anywhere on the earth's surface and no place is immune, yet they are most likely to happen at the present time in the newly formed geological regions such as are found along the Western Coast of South America, our own Western Coast, up to Alaska and down the other side of the Pacific by way of Japan, the Philippines and Java.

Because an earthquake occurs in one place is no indication that it will be followed by another in some other quakey regions. They do not run in series, unless the changes made in the load at one point may be so great as to cause additional strain at another place sufficient to cause a break.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLES

BOGUS ANTIQUE IVORIES

Many returning tourists delight in having acquired antique ivories, packed in leather-covered boxes, often bearing the crest of some noble French family. They are, however, the victims of a new school of "bone sculptors" which is making Paris its centre. The "artists" are specializing in imitations of carvings executed between the ninth and sixteenth centuries. It has been found that by simply boiling in infusions of tobacco juice and an alcoholic infusion of raisin seeds or washing in hydrogen peroxide, followed by an oven treatment, it is possible to give the finest coloring of age in a short time.

PARROT TAKES GAS

George, a Panama parrot belonging to W. O. Brecken, Pittsburgh, Pa., is ill, out of sorts and wants to die.

George has a cold, and when his owner took heroic measures to rid him of the malady the parrot lost all interest in life. One day recently he was found near a gas jet unconscious, with the gas escaping into the room.

Again the next Sunday, when no person was in the studio where George is kept, he twisted the catch off his cage door with his powerful beak and a short time later Brecken entered the studio to find George "nearly all in" and stretched on his back. The gas jet was again wide open.

Now George went on a hunger strike and threw his seed can at Socrates, the erstwhile Airedale buddy.

"HOT DOGS" POPULAR WITH CUBANS

Education is a wonderful thing. Wonderful to relate, even the appetite of the Cubans may be educated, the same as their taste for racing and for the one step. Two years ago the populace of Havana had never indulged in the popular American food "hot dog."

Last year Hal Stevens, the grand stand restauranteur, introduced to the Cuban natives the "hot dogs" he serves to thousands of Polo Grounds bugs and Saratoga turf devotees, and these boys down here go to the imported diet with as much relish as their Northern neighbors.

That the "dogs" may be served in the identical way they are fished out at the Polo Grounds, Mr. Stevens' import, the Frankfurt, receptacles they are boiled in and even the man who serves them—D. W. Scott—from Gotham. Only the rolls are Havana products in the serving of the ever popular "hot dogs."

WATCH YOUR \$50 BILLS

A Treasury Department circular announces the discovery of a new counterfeit \$50 Federal Reserve note.

The note is on the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, with the check letter A and face plate No. 7. The names of William G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, and John Burke, Treasurer of the United States, are signed to the note, which is printed in green ink.

of paper between which silk threads have been distributed. Coloring matter has been applied to the seal and numbers on the face of the note, the back being subjected to a green toned solution. The number of the specimen is D 1050729A.

A careful examination of the face of the bill will indicate its character, as the fine lines of the lathe work are missing and in their stead in most of the border solid black appears.

CANNIBAL TRIBES ONCE OCCUPIED MISSOURI VALLEY

The bones of a thousand prehistoric cannibals are sticking out of a big hill near Blair, Neb., a few miles above Omaha. "The bones are so numerous it looks like a last year's cornfield," says Dr. Robert F. Gilder, former archaeologist of the University of Nebraska.

Dr. Gilder was called to investigate the fiend as soon as the discovery was made. He spent several days in the district but because of the frozen condition of the earth he was unable to make any excavations. So the real investigation has been postponed until spring warmth thaws the frozen ground.

Dr. Gilder was unable to determine how deeply the burials were originally made, and, furthermore, he is not sure that the bodies were not washed down to their final resting place during the prehistoric flood which caused the death of so many monsters of an early date and deposited their bodies along the Nebraska rivers and plains where they are so often dug up.

Dr. Gilder believes some other bones he has just seen near Tekamah to be similar to those he is now engaged in excavating near Bellevue, Neb., ten miles below Omaha.

In the Bellevue excavations Dr. Gilder has discovered absolute proof of cannibalism on the part of the early inhabitants of the Missouri Valley. In a number of these excavations Dr. Gilder has found piles of roasted human bones. Sometimes these bones still retain marks of implements used in scraping off the flesh. The bones were under piles of wood ashes which acted as a preservative.

Dr. Gilder has obtained permission to make excavations in a particularly fine ancient house site near his discoveries in the Bellevue district. Under the formula of Charles Darwin as to the length of time required for nature to fill excavations out in the open Dr. Gilder says this particular house was occupied when Egypt was in its glory. "At least 4,000 years have passed since this house was first occupied," says Gilder.

Curiously, Gilder has discovered that two distinct peoples, from 3,000 to 4,000 years apart, have occupied that housesite.

"As I dug downward I was rather disappointed to find that the housesite was occupied only a few years ago by a tribe of the Omaha and Pawnee Indians," says Dr. Gilder. "But when you dig still further down, I find that it took place about 4,000 years ago. The Indians who lived in the house, the Indians who really a tribe of savages, were the Pawnee Indians, I believe."

TENNYSON GREAT SMOKER

Alfred Tennyson, poet laureate of England, was a great smoker. He did not affect cigars. His joy was in a pipe of genuine Virginia tobacco. The common clay pipe was his choice. In his literary den he had a box full of white clay pipes, says the Huntington, W. Va., Advertiser. Filling one of these, he would smoke until it was empty, break it in twain, and throw the fragments into another box prepared for their reception. Then he would pull another pipe from its straw or wooden inclosure, fill it, light it, and destroy it as the one before. He would not smoke a pipe the second time.

But Tennyson had a great store of pipes of other styles, mostly presents from admirers and friends. The visitor had his choice, be it a hookah marghile, meer-schaum, or dhu-deen. He also was familiar with all grades of smoking tobacco, and a guest could select at will Latakia, Connecticut leaf, Perique Lone Jack, Michigan, Killikinick, Highlander, or any of the English brands.

Milton was a smoker, too. When composing "Paradise Lost", it is said that he never retired for the night without first having his pipe of tobacco and a glass of water.



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AGENTS—Mason sold 18 Comet Sprayers and Auto-washers one Saturday. Profit \$2.50 each. Particulars free. Established 30 years. Rusler Co., 21A, Johnstown, Ohio.

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PATENTS

INVENTIONS commercialized. Patents or unpatented. Write Adam Fisher Mfg. Co., 259, St. Louis, Mo.

PERSONAL

MOUSTACHE Best ingredient, is Kotalko, contains genuine bear oil and other potent ingredients. Send 10 cents for proof box of this true hair grower. Kotalko, P.O. Box, Stanton X, New York.

EYEBROWS—Get them back! help. Will you like to experiment? Get Kotalko at druggist's or send 10 cents for proof box to Kotalko Office, 5K-5H, Stanton X, New York.

WEALTHY young lady, affectionate and pretty, would marry. (E-B-M) B-1022, Wichita, Kans.

MANY very wealthy young ladies. Price a dollar. Write Mrs. Martin, B-1022, Wichita, Kans.

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LADY, 25 years old, wants to marry. H. H. Box 87, Louisville, Ky.

LADY, 25 years old, wants to marry. H. H. Box 87, Louisville, Ky.

PERSONAL—Continued

BACHELOR, 40, worth \$30,000, wants lady correspondent. G, Box 35, League, Toledo, Ohio.

PRETTY WIDOW, 23, wealthy, wants husband. F, Box 85, League, Toledo, Ohio.

WINTER in Florida. Marry charming maiden worth \$80,000. Box 55, Oxford, Fla.

RANCHMAN, 59, worth \$100,000, wants wife. D, Box 432, League, Columbus, Ohio.

LONESOME people wishing to marry write confidential. League, Box 432, Columbus, Ohio.

MARRIAGE PAPER—20th year. Big issue with descriptions, photos, names and addresses. 25 cents. No other fee. Sent sealed. Box 2265-R, Boston, Mass.

ASTROLOGY—STARS TELL LIFE'S STORY. Send birthdate and dime for trial reading. Eddy, Westport St., 83-72, Kansas City, Mo.

SIXTH AND SEVENTH BOOKS OF MOSES. Egyptian secrets. Black art, other rare books. Catalog free. Star Book Co., IR23, 123 Federal St., Camden, N. J.

MARRY RICH—Hundreds anxious. Description list free. Select Club, Dept. A, Rapid City, So. Dakota.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY with photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 545, Kansas City, Mo.

WHOM SHOULD YOU MARRY? We'll tell you. Send 30c and birth date to Character Studies, 1515 Masonic Temple, New York City.

LONESOME—Make friends everywhere, many wealthy. Particulars for stamp. Smith K., Box 3125, Portland, Or.

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IF YOU WANT A WEALTHY, LOVING WIFE, write Violet Rays, Dennison, Ohio. Enclose stamped envelope.

BEST, LARGEST MATRIMONIAL CLUB in Country. Established 17 Years. Thousands Wealthy wishing Early Marriage. Confidential, Free. The Old Reliable Club. Mrs. Wrubel, Box 26, Oakland, Calif.

MARRY—Free photographs, directory and descriptions of wealthy members. Pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 38, Kansas City, Mo.

WOULD you write a wealthy, pretty girl? (stamp) Lois Sprout, Sta. H, Cleveland, Ohio.

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IF REALLY LONELY, write Betty Lee, Inc., 4254 Broadway, New York City. Send stamp. Don't forget to write!

IF LONESOME exchange jolly letters with beautiful ladies and wealthy gentlemen. Eva Moore, Box 908, Jacksonville, Fla. (Stamp).

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WHY BE LONESOME? Correspond with our lady members. Names, address complete \$1.00. Cosmopolitan Club, Box 428-1, Venice, Calif.

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Once the resurrection plant is dead, it will come to life again. It will open its buds and grow to 10 inches. It will live up to 10 years. It is a resurrection plant or winter green. To get it, order for 10c. AGENTS WANTED.

JOHNSON SMITH CO. Dept. 800 2224 N. Halsted, Chicago

BOSTON RATS RUN FREE

The rats of the city had a holiday recently. The rat catchers were on strike. The Fall season, with its frosts, ordinarily one of rodent discomfort, became one of almost unhampered rambling and foraging and consequent content. In department stores railroad terminals, business buildings and confectionery and other shops served by the only two companies in the city with man, dog and ferret aids to extermination instead of poisons, protection was incomplete or passive.

All the men rat catchers employed by each were on strike for more money, shorter hours and workless Sundays. Dogs, trained to work only with the men assigned as their masters, were of little use.

W. G. Geekie, head of one company, explained that his eight men and the men of the other company, about the same in number, formed a union and set about to change their working conditions. "They now work from 6 at night to 4 in the morning, get 62½ cents an hour, and work during the day and on Sunday at pay and one-half. They demand a shorter night, starting at 10 o'clock instead of 6, 80 cents an hour and no Sunday work," he said.

BASEBALL SUIT & CAP FREE

Great material, firm and durable. Small, broad shoulders, very long, double front; pants, very strong, with pockets, belt stripes and knee elastic; CAP, happy, new League shape. Complete suit and Cap, even for baseball players. Blouse at 15 cents a package. Write for blouse. DUKE MFG. CO., 817 Main Street, CONCORD JUNCTION, MASS.



LURE SEALS TO DEATH BY MUSIC

Lured to their death by various musical instruments, hair seals, the most destructive salmon trap thieves, easily fall victims to bounty hunters, who are now hunting them near the largest rookeries on Puget Sound.

The hair seal—not the valuable fur bearers of Bering Sea—are fish eaters, and during the summer salmon runs tear their way into the salmon nets and traps.

They do not catch salmon because of hunger, for often a single bite is snapped out of the fat back of a fish and the rest left to other sea scavengers, so the hair seal is rightly labeled by the packing industry as a destructive pest. The State pays a bounty of \$3 for each hair seal killed and presented to the State Auditor.

Hair seals possess an absorbing affinity for musical notes, the wailing of a single fiddle string, the metallic wheeze of an old accordion, a mouth organ or other reed instrument. Hearing the music, seals in the vicinity poke their heads high above the surf, and a good rifleman cannot fail to hit the fairly large mark. The dead seal sinks at once, but refloats in a few hours and is tossed ashore by the tide.

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FREE Given for selling only 40 packs vegetable seeds at 10c per large pack. EARN BIG MONEY or premiums—our seeds sell easily. Get sample lot today. Send no money—WE TRUST YOU. American Seed Co., Box X-127, Lancaster, Pa.

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10 in 1

Adjustable

Pencil, pen, paper

knife, ink eraser, pencil

sharpener, nail file, and

cleaner, mechanic's marking

point, fine compass with screw

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Ford Given

Solve This Puzzle—Win 5,000 Votes

6 15 18 4
9 19 6 18 5 5



What words do these numbers make? The numbers in the squares represent letters of the alphabet. Figure 1 is A, 2 is B and so on. The ten figures spell three words. What are the words?

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Yes, learn to be an expert wrestler right in your own home, by mail, from the greatest wrestlers the world has ever known. Be an athlete, be strong, be healthy. Learn how to throw and handle big men with ease. Learn to defend yourself. Learn from the World's Champions.

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If you are too fat, you owe it to yourself to give these fat reducers a fair trial. All the better drug stores the world over sell Marmola Prescription Tablets at one dollar per package. Ask your druggist for them or send one dollar to the Marmola Co., 304 Garfield Bldg., Detroit, Mich. and secure a package of these tablets. They are harmless and reduce your weight without going through long sieges of tiresome exercise and starvation diet. If you are too fat try this today.

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